

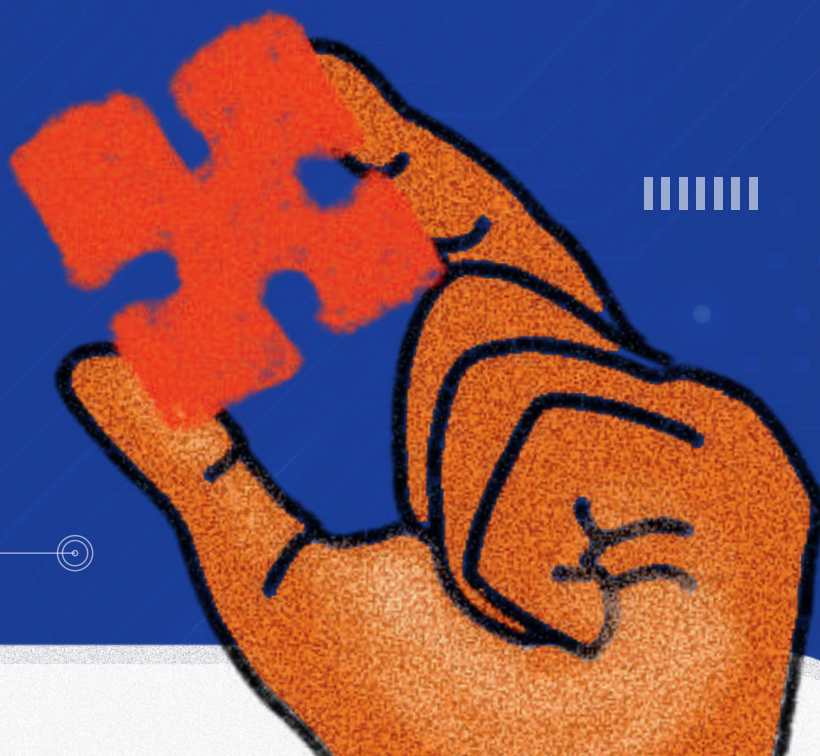


6th DIGITAL
CITIZEN
SUMMIT
2024

Algorithms,
AI and
Accountability

REPORT 2024

T-HUB, Hyderabad





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Acknowledgements

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This report is a summary document of Digital Citizen Summit 2024, produced by Digital Empowerment Foundation.

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About Digital Citizen Summit

Digital Citizen Summit is a global multistakeholder platform initiated by Digital Empowerment Foundation to discuss and deliberate on digital rights and citizenship to advocate for accessible, affordable, and meaningful Internet.

This annual event, meticulously organised by a synergy of technology and social innovation experts, brings together a diverse and dynamic gathering of scholars, academics, practitioners, civil society organisations, and government representatives who share a profound interest in technology, digital citizenship, and social innovation.

Since its inception in 2016, the Digital Citizen Summit (DCS) has been built around the broader discourse of how individual rights are refracted through, inflected and impacted by complex digital ecosystems.

Traversing the landscape of social media and internet rights in 2016; access, rights, and privacy in 2017, DCS 2018 explored the key challenges of privacy, surveillance, intimidation, censorship, and misinformation emerging within the online environment, revealing the underside of a hyper-connected world while half the population continues to lack the



basic access to such resources. In 2019, it was decided to restructure the DCS to do a deep-dive on a particular issue to engage subject-matter experts and practitioners across its multiple dimensions in order to develop meaningful stakeholder engagements and leverage and advance the collective work done by different stakeholders in a given area. Accordingly, DCS 2019 explored the intractable online information landscape of misinformation and disinformation and the compounding legal and social challenges it has thrown up in terms of developing a solution for its effective regulation that works within a rights-based framework.

Through its past editions, the DCS journey has demonstrated the diversity of issues currently at stake in the space of digital rights and range of stakeholder engagements that would require confronting outstanding challenges.

The 5th Digital Summit after the Covid Pandemic was focused on “Commoning the Internet for a Vibrant Democracy” where crucial topics like related to internet governance, human rights, and the future of internet was discussed.



About Digital Citizen Summit 2024

Reaching a milestone, the 6th edition of DCS in 2024 was organised in collaboration with the Government of Telangana in Hyderabad and focused to understand the ethics and accountability issues emerging in the use of artificial intelligence in India and South Asia. We aim to unpack the opacity and technological languages around AI to democratise the discourse around it. The two-day event had around 20 sessions (including plenary, technical and special sessions) and 10 lighting talks to bring together students, researchers, academics, civil society representatives, developers, and public policy professionals to present their research, experiences, observations, and opinions through panel discussions, lighting talks, workshops, networking sessions, and paper presentation.

The Digital Citizen Summit 2024 focused on “**Algorithms, AI, and Accountability**,” delving into the ethics and accountability issues that emerged from artificial intelligence in South Asia and India. The summit critically engaged with the dimension of AI and fostered discussions around its responsible use, bringing together experts from diverse sectors to present their research and insights. We were thankful to our principal partners, associate partners, outreach partners, session partners, and media partners for making these events successful.

There were more than 1,600 registrations and over 90 speakers from across South Asia, who highlighted the need to build a future where there was no denial of rights due to a lack of digital infrastructure, data biases, or algorithmic injustice, and to develop responsible AI for social good.

Several students and researchers also participated from the University of Hyderabad, MANUU, TISS Hyderabad, NALSAR Hyderabad, IIITH, Kakatiya University, Institute of Aeronautical Engineering, and various institutions across Telangana State.

There were discussions and deliberations on AI, algorithms, and accountability from a citizen's perspective involving various national and international organisations such as Digital Green, SFLC, Access Now, YKA, Pacta, CDPP, Commons Collective, DFL, POV, ISEA, and others over the two days. Alongside these civil society organisations, workers' unions such as MKSS and the Telangana Gig Workers and Platforms Union led conversations about the challenges beneficiaries face due to the datafication of rights. A public hearing was held on the first day of the summit, jointly organised by SAFAR, MKSS, LibTech India, and delegates from Jharkhand, where individuals who had been excluded from their rights, such as wages and pensions, due to data theft, data corruption, and other issues, shared their experiences.

Background to the Theme for Digital Citizen Summit 2024:

Artificial Intelligence is often presented as a solution to social, economic, environmental, and political problems. Within India, AI has gained significant traction with the government promoting its development and adoption in various sectors such as healthcare, education, urban development, governance, agriculture and transportation to boost the economy. This comes with its own set of issues where different layers of power intersect with its development, planning and implementation. While AI, like any technology, has the potential to democratise access to knowledge and ease human labour, this process itself has to be more participatory and inclusive. For example, reviews have shown that algorithms are more likely to mark areas with higher

Muslim and Dalit populations as unsafe and dodgy which has resulted in over-policing in these areas. There has also been an increase in the use of AI for welfare automation, however, most of this technology is used for risk modelling and fraud detection. This has resulted in the identification of false positive cases leading to exclusion and denial of welfare for genuine individuals. Artificial intelligence is being used as a quick solution to fix governance issues.

One of the reasons why these technologies are having an adverse effect on the communities is because they are not involved as a stakeholder in these conversations. They are often relegated to a passive role while the producers design, develop, and produce AI and machine learning tools. Similarly, communities are on the passive and receiving end of the policies that are designed to govern their data and lack agency in deciding what data gets collected and how it gets used. As a result, it becomes difficult to hold 'objective' algorithms accountable when they show bias or discrimination in their technology and the error is often shifted.

This raises the question – **How can the citizens participate in building AI accountability? Who is to be held accountable for the bias shown by AI? What should be the role of regulatory bodies in AI governance? How is AI and algorithms enabling the exclusion of communities and individuals?**

The sub-themes for this year's DCS were, but not limited to:

1. Big Data, Algorithmic Bias, Discrimination:

- What factors lead to a bias in algorithms and big data?
- What approaches/methods can be used to address these possible biases?
- What are some recorded instances of algorithmic bias and what impact did it have on the marginalised communities?
- How are different stakeholders contributing towards addressing these potential biases?



2. Representative and Ethical AI Development:

- What role can different stakeholders play in ensuring the ethical development of AI?
- How can the issues of algorithmic opacity and algorithmic accountability be addressed?
- How can the needs of the community be kept at the center while designing AI innovations?
- How can we design AI while keeping the needs of marginalized communities at the center?
- What kinds of safeguards are needed to protect individuals from the newer forms of threats that can result from the use of AI?

3. AI Access and Meaningful Connectivity:

- How can different stakeholders contribute towards building AI literacy?
- How does digital public infrastructure contribute to improving AI access?
- How can different stakeholders contribute towards ensuring affordable AI for all?
- How can AI accommodate principles of non-discrimination and equal access?

4. AI, Workers, and Platform Economies:

- What are the potential risks of integrating AI in platform economies?
- What strategies can be undertaken to promote worker rights while using AI in platform economies?
- How can workers advocate for better working conditions with the rise of AI-driven management?
- How can platform economies improve data transparency between consumers and workers?



5. AI Regulation and Citizen Centric Governance:

- How can AI policy and governance be designed to keep different perspectives, especially those living in the Global South, in mind?
- What needs of the community must be ensured while designing AI regulations and policy?
- How can a bottom-up approach be used to design community-centric AI governance?

6. AI, Misinformation, and Disinformation:

- What role does AI play in controlling the spread of online misinformation?
- How is AI contributing towards the increase in misinformation?
- What impact will AI-generated misinformation have on democracy and public institutes?
- How can AI contribute towards differentiating between authentic sources of information and misinformation?

7. Data Citizenship and Community Making:

- How can citizens work towards promoting data-driven governance and decision-making?
- What are some of the ethical considerations for storing, collecting, and using personal data?
- What initiatives can be designed to promote diversity and representation in data?
- What measures can individuals and communities take in the wake of excessive data collection?

8. Online Privacy, Security, and Data Rights:

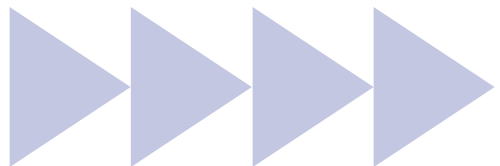
- What are some key challenges individuals face in protecting their online data?
- What legal frameworks will support the communities in maintaining their online privacy and data rights?
- How can AI Algorithms impact the privacy and security of individuals?

9. The Absent Data:

- What impact will algorithms and big data have on community knowledge?
- How does the absence of data influence AI decision-making processes?
- What are some ethical considerations in providing AI access for all, especially marginalised populations?
- How does the lack of data influence how algorithms are designed?

10. AI and Environment:

- How can AI work towards support in mitigating climate change?
- How is AI contributing towards exploitation of the environment and natural resources?
- What is the carbon footprint of big data sets and training AI algorithms?



DCS Advisory Committee 2024



**Shri Jayesh
Ranjan, IAS**
Principal
Secretary to
Government
of Telangana,
Industries &

Commerce (I&C) Department,
& Information Technology,
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of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social
Sciences (TISS), Mumbai.



Sujit Jagirdar

CEO, T-HUB

Welcome Address

Sujit Jagirdar, CEO of T-Hub, Hyderabad, welcomes delegates from around the globe and sets the tone for an impactful event focused on digital transformation. Highlighting the persistent challenge of the digital divide, he draws attention to the fact that over 50% of the global population, especially the bottom 60%, lacks access to essential digital tools and technologies. Citing India's success with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as a transformative example, he also underscores the potential for digitisation to revolutionise healthcare, insurance, and education sectors. Acknowledging the efforts of Osama Manzar, Founder-Director of the Digital Empowerment Foundation, in bridging the digital divide, he emphasises the importance of platforms like DCS (Digital Citizen Summit) in fostering collaboration and driving action-oriented solutions. He envisions this gathering as a catalyst for generating innovative approaches to create a more inclusive digital future.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Osama Manzar

Founder-Director,
Digital Empowerment
Foundation

Introductory Address

In the opening remarks of the 6th Digital Citizen Summit 2024, Osama Manzar, Founder-Director of the Digital Empowerment Foundation, sheds light on the pressing challenges of digital inclusion, algorithmic accountability, and the environmental impact of AI. He highlights a stark reality—48% of India’s population has never used the internet, and among rural Indians, only a fraction can perform online transactions. Focusing on the environmental cost of AI, Osama explained that a single AI module’s carbon footprint equals 360 global flights, urging the audience to critically evaluate the intersection of technology, sustainability, and inclusion. With over 1600 registrations and support from local, regional and global organizations, the Summit focuses on shifting the narrative from digital consumerism to meaningful digital citizenship. This thought-provoking address called for collective action to bridge digital divides and make technology equitable, accountable, and environmentally responsible.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Session Summaries







Pankaj Pachauri, Rajnesh Singh, Sonia Jorge, Rakshita Swamy and Sowmya Kidambi (from left to right)

Inaugural Plenary Session: Imagining a Just Future: Intersections of Access, Rights, and AI

Sujit Jagirdar, CEO of T-Hub, Hyderabad, welcomes delegates from around the globe and sets the tone for an impactful event focused on digital transformation. Highlighting the persistent challenge of the digital divide, he draws attention to the fact that over 50% of the global population, especially the bottom 60%, lacks access to essential digital tools and technologies. Citing India's success with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as a transformative example, he also underscores the potential for digitisation to revolutionise healthcare, insurance, and education sectors. Acknowledging the efforts of Osama Manzar, Founder-Director of the Digital Empowerment Foundation, in bridging the digital divide, he emphasises the importance of platforms like DCS (Digital Citizen Summit) in fostering collaboration and driving action-oriented solutions. He envisions this gathering as a catalyst for generating innovative approaches to create a more inclusive digital future.

Speakers:

- Shri Jayesh Ranjan, Special Chief Secretary, Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications (ITE&C) and Department of Industries & Commerce, Government of Telangana (virtual)
- Rajnesh Singh, CEO, APNIC Foundation
- Sonia Jorge, Executive Director, Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP)
- Sowmya Kidambi, Director and CEO, Barefoot College
- Rakshita Swamy, Founder and Director, Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR)

Key Takeaways

- Highlighting India's stark economic disparities and the challenges the digital divide poses.
- There are critical concerns about the neglect of underserved communities, particularly MNREGA workers who face hurdles in accessing their wages due to digital certification issues.
- The automated systems and digital inefficiencies disproportionately affect marginalised communities, denying them access not through overt corruption but through technological hurdles.
- The stark inequalities in digital access, particularly those stemming from gender-based income disparities, call for action to ensure inclusivity in the digital society.
- Critical analysis of the intersection between digital technologies, social welfare programs, and workers' rights, and highlighting the unintended consequences of digital interventions in social welfare systems.
- The key challenges are that outdated databases leads to exclusion, the inability of digital tools to eliminate corruption, and increased complexity in identity verification systems. Using examples like facial recognition issues in MNREGA, underscores how these technologies, instead of empowering, often create new barriers for vulnerable communities.

Jayesh Ranjan's online address for the Inaugural Panel:

Jayesh Ranjan, Special Chief Secretary, Department of ITE&C, Government of Telangana, highlights the transformative potential of technology in empowering vulnerable and underprivileged communities. Drawing from impactful examples in Telangana, particularly in agriculture, he demonstrates how technology can drive meaningful change. While raising an important concerns about technology's potential to exclude and disempower individuals if not implemented thoughtfully. He emphasises the critical role of strong receiving mechanisms, community mobilisation, and strategic investments in ensuring that the benefits of technology are accessible to all. Celebrating the spirit of collaboration, Mr Jayesh commends the Digital Citizen Summit as a platform for addressing global challenges and fostering inclusive solutions. At the end he congratulates the Digital Empowerment Foundation and its partners for hosting the event in Hyderabad, wishing attendees a productive and enlightening experience.

From the speaker's desk:

The government ,the corporates who own the technology and platforms are interested only in the people who can subscribe to their different packages, they are not interested in the broader issues of the citizens.

**Pankaj
Pachauri**

Technological systems meant for benefits like pension distribution often create barriers instead of solutions.

**Sowmya
Kidambi**

Digital access goes beyond mere connectivity, encompassing affordability, reliability, appropriate devices, relevant content, digital skills, and the protection of digital rights.

Sonia Jorge

The need to critically evaluate claims of digital technology and focus on solutions that genuinely benefit workers and marginalised groups.

Rakshita Swamy

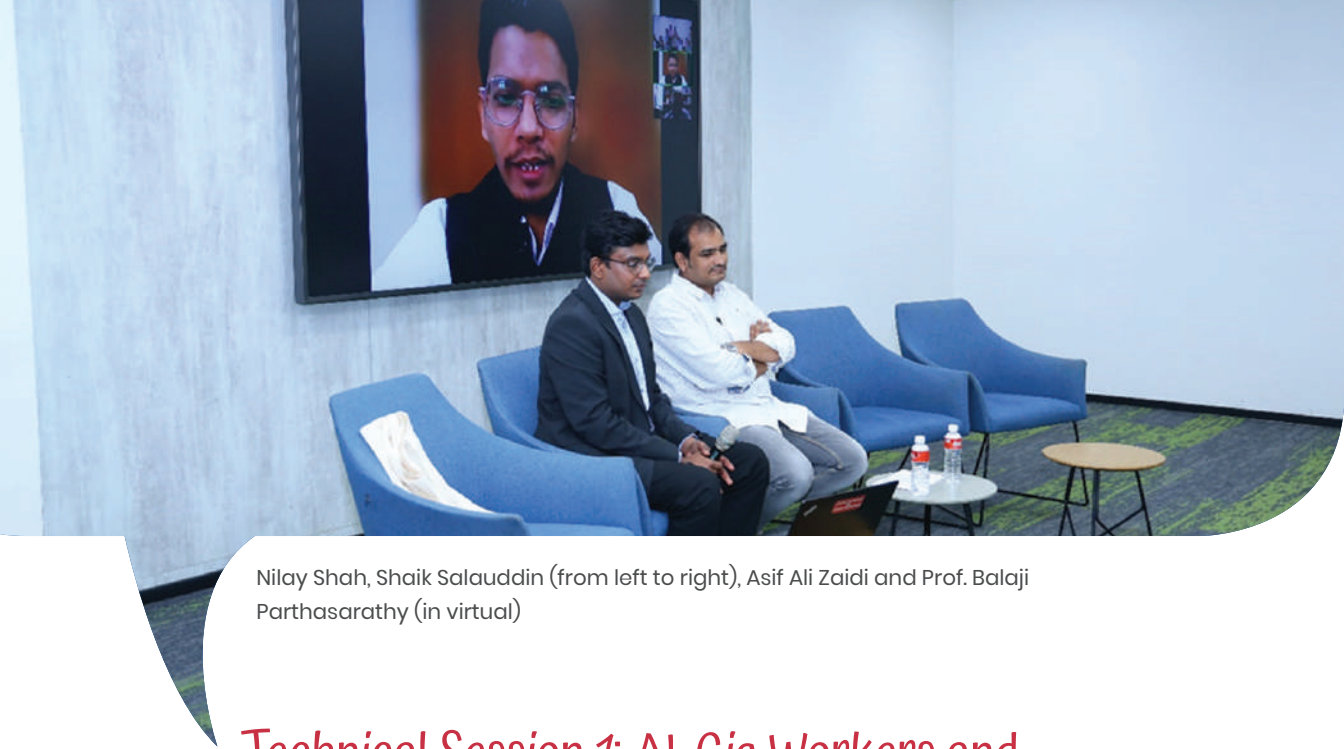
The barriers to connectivity/ access are often more political than technological, economic citing challenges such as securing right-of-way permissions.

Rajnesh Singh

Recommendations

- Urgent need to design inclusive digital systems that prioritise people over processes, ensuring that technology becomes a tool for empowerment rather than exclusion.
- Meaningful access for all.
- Bridging digital and gender gaps is a collective responsibility for policymakers, technologists, and advocates present at the Summit, urging them to drive meaningful change for a more equitable digital ecosystem.
- The need to critically evaluate claims of digital technology and focus on solutions that genuinely benefit workers and marginalised groups.
- The private sector should also be held accountable for service delivery and affordability of those resources.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Nilay Shah, Shaik Salauddin (from left to right), Asif Ali Zaidi and Prof. Balaji Parthasarathy (in virtual)

Technical Session 1: AI, Gig Workers and Dignity of Labour

About the Session

The panel discussion examined the growing challenges faced by gig workers in the rapidly evolving technological landscape. Through discussions on the role of AI, algorithmic management, and regulatory gaps, the panel explored how these developments impact worker autonomy, dignity, and rights. The session highlighted the pressing need for inclusive and ethical frameworks to support gig workers in an increasingly automated world by addressing key issues such as the lack of social security, data transparency, and equitable grievance redressal mechanisms.

Speakers

- Shaik Salauddin, Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union
- Asif Ali Zaidi, Software Freedom Law Center
- Professor Balaji Parthasarathy, IIIT Bangalore



Moderator:

Nilay Shah, Software Freedom Law Center

Key Takeaways

- Algorithmic control by aggregator companies often fosters systemic discrimination and reduces workers' access to incentives and livelihoods.
- The lack of transparency in algorithm design and decision-making processes alienates gig workers from the systems that govern their work.
- Surveillance and privacy violations undermine workers' dignity and autonomy.
- There is a lack of comprehensive legislation to safeguard privacy and ensure worker protection.
- The lack of agency for workers in algorithm-driven systems undermines the fundamental idea of gig work.
- There are issues in grievance redressal as workers face challenges while performing or delivering services. When these issues are raised, they are often met with automated chatbots rather than meaningful human intervention.
- Workers have no choice in task selection as Algorithms, such as Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), compel workers to accept assignments, leaving them with little to no choice or consent in task selection.
- There is supply and demand management as workers are pressured to meet an equilibrium dictated by algorithms, striving for a balance that prioritizes platform efficiency over worker autonomy.
- Algorithms can perpetuate discrimination against workers on the consumer end, manifesting in various ways that undermine fairness and inclusivity.
- There are regulatory gaps in AI governance, such as the absence of national guidelines to standardize worker protections and address inequities across states.

- Platforms often create status hierarchies based on specific criteria, allowing gig workers to book time slots to work. This approach undermines the foundational principle of gig work, which is rooted in flexibility and autonomy.
- There is a lack of worker agency as current legislative frameworks fail to adequately address the need, leaving little room for gig workers to voice their concerns or negotiate their status within the system.
- Case Studies such as the objections raised by NASCOM and the Internet Association against the Karnataka Bill, which sought to regulate platform work. While workers organizing collectively is often viewed as a political act, the objections by these associations are framed merely as concerns, skewing the narrative in favour of corporate interests.

From the Speaker's desk:

Social security, data transparency, and involvement in governance underscore the technological advancements far outpace policy responses, leaving gig workers vulnerable.

Shaik Salauddin

The disproportionate burden is borne by poorer communities, who are frequently subjected to technological experiments and excessive surveillance, a practice which can be called "digital Taylorism."

Asif Ali Zaidi



Algorithms, such as Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), compel workers to accept assignments, leaving them with little to no choice or consent in task selection.

Balaji Parthasarathy

The term “partner” is a loophole used by companies to bypass labour laws, masking the true nature of the employer-worker relationship.

Asif Ali

Recommendations

The panel discussion culminated in a series of actionable recommendations aimed at addressing the challenges faced by gig workers in an AI-driven economy:

- **National Guidelines:** Establishing a uniform set of national standards to address disparities across states. Codifying these parameters would ensure that essential issues are consistently addressed nationwide.
- **Collective Bargaining:** Encouraging collective bargaining mechanisms to facilitate standardization at local levels. This would allow workers to secure access to minimum wages and basic rights tailored to their specific contexts.
- **Social Security Inclusion:** Expanding the scope of existing regulations to ensure that gig and platform workers are explicitly covered under social security codes, safeguarding their rights and dignity in the evolving digital economy.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Vaishali Soni conducting the session

Technical session 2: Data Sets and AI - Reimagining the Digital Tapestry through a Feminist Lens

About the Session

This workshop delved into the foundational aspects of Artificial Intelligence and its societal implications. Vaishali Soni introduced the basics of AI, emphasizing its learning processes and inherent biases. At the same time, Prathana Mitra explored how AI shapes narratives and reflects societal inequalities, sparking discussions on inclusivity and representation. The workshop fostered critical reflections on the intersection of AI, data, and representation through a mixed method of foundational explanations and participatory activities.

Speakers

- Vaishali Soni, Point of View
- Prathana Mitra, Point of View



Key Takeaways

- The emergence of dominant narratives influenced by AI systems.
- The language of the internet creates barriers to access and perpetuates inequalities.
- There are challenges to achieving inclusivity, especially for marginalized communities.
- The difficulty in articulating and categorizing labels and data in ways that foster broader inclusivity.

From the Speaker's desk:

Currently, AI cannot create original content but instead reflects human thoughts, biases, and opinions embedded in its training and interactions.

Vaishali Soni

AI's responses to descriptors like "beautiful," "feminist," and "queer" often align with stereotypes or dominant societal views.

Prarthana Mitra

Recommendations

- Stakeholders should prioritize representing voices from marginalized and underrepresented communities in datasets to avoid biases in datasets.
- Design must be inclusive by rethinking labels, descriptors, and data categorization methods to ensure they reflect diverse and intersectional identities without reinforcing stereotypes.
- AI developers and organizations must commit to audits and evaluations to ensure ethical compliance and inclusivity in developing AI products.



Shweta Singh, Sweta Kolluri, Dr. Shaik N. Meera, Akshay Nambi, Rajesh Jalan
(from left to right)

Technical Session 3: Harnessing AI for the Smallholders

About the Session

The session explored how artificial intelligence can benefit smallholder farmers globally, focusing on three key areas: Advisories, which deliver personalized, timely, and mission-critical farming advice; Market Access by enhancing farmers' ability to connect with local and global markets and lastly ensuring Financial Inclusion by Improving access to credit, insurance, and other financial services, with a gender-inclusive lens.



Speakers:

- Akshay Nambi, Microsoft Research
- Swetha Kolluri, World Bank
- Rajesh Jalan, Cropin
- Shweta Singh, Corteva AgriSciences

Moderator

Dr. Shaik N. Meera, Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute

Key Takeaways:

- The evolution of AI in agriculture is shifting from basic Q&A systems to advanced conversational models.
- The use of “micro-LLM” (localized AI models) should be there for precise, language-specific advisories tailored to crops and regions.
- There is a need for advocacy for frugal and open-source AI solutions to ensure equitable access for smallholders.
- The importance of ecosystem collaboration, dividing regions into 1 km grids for localized data delivery.
- Bias-free and context-aware AI models are crucial for delivering actionable insights to farmers.
- Emphasis should be on multimodal approaches, including segmented farming videos, to address farmers’ specific queries.
- There should not be over-reliance on GenAI; rather, the importance should be on gradual deployment and expert verification.
- There should be focus on AI’s potential in promoting climate resilience and sustainability in agriculture.

- There is a need for open data ecosystems to enable collaboration among farmers, policymakers, and researchers.
- AI can help bridge gaps in carbon financing, incentivizing sustainable farming practices.
- There are unique challenges faced by women farmers, who contribute 70–90% of agricultural labor but lack adequate training and resources. There is a need to highlight initiatives supporting women-led Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to enhance market and input access.
- There is need to build AI solutions that account for gender-specific challenges, such as mobility and limited digital access.

From the Speaker's Desk:

Farmer.Chat, a generative AI platform empowering extension agents to provide personalized farming advice.

**Akshay
Nambi**

The use of “micro-LLM” (localized AI models) for precise, language-specific advisories tailored to crops and regions.

**Rajesh
Jalan**



DIGRA is an open-access platform for analyzing climate-smart agricultural practices.

Swetha Kolluri

There is a need for AI solutions that account for gender-specific challenges, such as mobility and limited digital access.

Shweta Singh

Recommendations

- **Data Integration:** Create standardized, open-access datasets to address data silos.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Invest in bridging the digital divide, especially for marginalized groups.
- **Climate Action:** Prioritize climate resilience in AI applications through sustainable farming practices.
- **Gender Focus:** Develop AI tools that cater to women farmers' unique needs.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Shruti Narayan, Rakesh Dubuddu (from left to right), Supriya Sharma and Kritika Goel (virtual from left to right)

Technical Session 4: GenAI and Disinformation: Regulate Platforms, Not People

About the Session

This Panel Discussion covered everything from AI's role in elections to creating a healthier information ecosystem. Generative AI has been talked about a lot lately, especially regarding how it might be used to spread fake news and influence elections. In 2024, political parties in India and other countries used AI to create campaign content. But interestingly, much of this content wasn't about attacking opponents—it was more about promoting candidates.



Speakers

- Rakesh Dubuddu, Factly
- Kritika Goel, Logically Facts (Virtual)
- Supriya Sharma, Scroll (Virtual)

Moderator:

Shruti Narayan, Access Now

Key Takeaways

- Fake news existed long before AI appeared. Even without advanced technology, misinformation has been spreading for years.
- Regulations designed to combat disinformation often stifle legitimate speech instead of addressing the actual problem.
- Solving the problem of disinformation isn't about blaming individuals for believing or sharing fake news. Instead, the focus should be on holding platforms accountable for their role in spreading misinformation.
- The goal isn't just to fight fake news but to create a world where people can access trustworthy information and share their opinions freely.
- The real problem lies in the decisions made by people—such as the business models of social media platforms that thrive on sensational content, whether true or not.

From the Speaker's Desk:

Tech solutions like AI detection tools can help, but their impact is limited without ground-level interventions.

**Rakesh
Dubuddu**

Building a better information ecosystem isn't just about technology; it's about people—educating, empowering, and enabling them to navigate the digital age responsibly.

Kritika Goel

AI may have made it faster to create fake content, but the core issue remains the same: misinformation can mislead people and disrupt democratic processes.

**Supriya
Sharma**



Recommendations

- Global disinformation requires a collaborative approach—activists, journalists, and international organizations must work together to counter false narratives and amplify credible voices.
- Empowering NGOs and CSOs to work directly with communities as their localized efforts can create more meaningful change.
- Introduce policies focusing on platform accountability, ensuring they take responsibility for monitoring and curbing disinformation.
- Design regulations that target harmful content without infringing on free speech. Involve civil society and experts in drafting policies to ensure balance.
- Use AI tools to detect misinformation but pair them with human oversight to address biases and ensure effective implementation.



Anvesh Baki and Mrinalini Ravindranath (from left to right)

Technical Session 5: Predictive Policing: A Misnomer Built on the Myth of Algorithmic Neutrality

About the session

In this panel, the speakers tackled the growing reliance on predictive policing—technology that claims to anticipate crime through algorithms. This practice is often shrouded in the myth of being a neutral and objective solution to policing inefficiencies. Yet, as the speakers revealed, such tools are anything but neutral. Instead, they carry forward the deep-seated biases of the systems and societies that



created them. Rooted in colonial-era practices, the modern-day criminal justice system continues to view specific communities, particularly marginalized groups, as inherently suspect. Predictive policing fails to address these biases and exacerbates them by embedding them into ostensibly advanced technological tools.

Speakers:

- Mrinalini Ravindranath, CPA
- Anvesh Baki, CPA

Key Takeaways:

- Databases—initially paper-based and now digital—have long been tools to criminalize people based on association and ancestry rather than behaviour. For instance, historical data about nomadic tribes once presumed to be criminals by birth continues to influence who is labelled as a “suspect” or “known offender” in modern police systems.
- The colonial government established systems like the *Thagi and Dekhalki Department*, the foundation of modern intelligence practices. This department monitored and controlled these communities and sought to predict their behaviour—an eerie precursor to today’s predictive policing.
- Predictive policing is not neutral or progressive but reinforces systemic inequities. There is critical role of caste in determining who gets targeted by these tools.
- Predictive policing is not a futuristic solution to crime but a modern extension of colonial-era control mechanisms. While the tools may appear sophisticated, their underlying logic is alarmingly regressive, perpetuating biases instead of eliminating them.

From the Speaker's desk:

Drawing parallel from the colonial-era laws such as the *Criminal Tribes Act*, the entire communities were labelled as “born criminals” based on hereditary biases rooted in caste and colonial logic. This systemic discrimination persists today, albeit in a digitized form.

**Mrinalini
Ravindranath**

The practices like geotagging criminals or integrating data from various sources to create so-called “criminal profiles” have practical implications on the lives of the communities.

Anvesh Baki

Recommendations :

- **Transparency:** Both panellists stressed the need for transparency in developing and implementing predictive policing tools. Algorithms and databases must be scrutinized for their biases.
- **Legal Reforms:** Stronger data protection laws should be enacted to ensure that individuals cannot be indefinitely surveilled or criminalized without evidence.
- **Abolition of Biased Tools:** Technologies that perpetuate systemic oppression, such as apps enabling indefinite suspect tracking, should be dismantled.
- **Focus on Community Solutions:** Instead of relying on tech-driven surveillance, resources should be directed toward addressing the root causes of crime, including poverty and systemic discrimination.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Romita Ghosh, Prof. Rajesh Chakrabarti, Dr. Gopika Gopan K., Dr. Akansha Natani (from left to right)

Technical session 6: AI and Public Policy

About the session:

The session focused on the intersection of AI and public policy, addressing challenges like regulation, ethical considerations, inclusivity, and sustainability. Prof. Chakrabarti introduced the topic by acknowledging the vast implications of AI, the need for responsible governance, and the balance between fostering innovation and ensuring accountability.

Speakers:

- Dr. Akansha Natani, IITH
- Dr. Gopika Gopan K, WadhvaniAI
- Ms. Romita Ghosh, iHeal HealthiTech



Moderator:

Prof. Rajesh Chakrabarti , Bennett University

Key Takeaways:

- Combined predictive and generative AI heightens misinformation risks, such as deepfakes.
- Advocated for human-in-the-loop systems in high-stakes scenarios like asylum applications.
- AI's environmental impact includes energy consumption and water usage by data centers. Case studies: Protests in Chile and Uruguay against water-intensive data centers.
- Algorithms reflect societal biases; examples of discriminatory practices in hiring and loan approvals.
- Real-world datasets are often biased, unstructured, or noisy. Example: AI models trained on biased school dropout data disproportionately flagged female students.
- Transparency in AI decision-making is essential but often difficult to achieve. Example: TB screening tools flagged 14% more cases than traditional methods but faced skepticism due to lack of explainability.
- There is tension between innovation and over-regulation, calling for balanced policies to support growth while mitigating harm.
- There is need for intersectional data to address biases in AI applications.

From the speaker's desk:

There is need to build trust as an integral part of AI innovations.

Romita Ghosh

There is AI potential to augment, not replace, human roles in fields like healthcare diagnostics.

Dr Gopika Gopan K

There is need for human-in-the-loop systems in high stake scenarios like asylum applications.

Dr Akansha Natani

Recommendations:

- Implement diversity by design and privacy by design principles in AI systems.
- Encourage human-in-the-loop processes for high-risk AI applications.
- Establish collaborative governance involving developers, governments, and end-users.
- Promote training workshops to ensure informed consent from marginalized communities.
- Support co-creational approaches to data usage and ownership to foster trust.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Priyanka Dutt, Anshul Tewari and Prof. Amir Ullah Khan
(from left to right)

Technical session 7: AI Usage by NGO in India: A Deployment Framework

About the session:

The panel explored the transformative potential of artificial intelligence for non-governmental organizations in India, focusing on technological innovation, ethical implementation, and societal impact.

Key Takeaways:

- Rather than viewing AI as a technological solution imposed from above, the panelists advocated for a more nuanced, contextually embedded approach that centers on human experience and community needs.
- This perspective represents a significant departure from traditional top-down technological implementations, positioning AI as a collaborative tool rather than a prescriptive mechanism.

- Healthcare emerged as a promising domain, with the potential for predictive diagnostics, resource allocation, and personalized intervention strategies in underserved communities.
- Educational outreach presented another compelling use case: AI could customize learning experiences, identify educational gaps, and create more inclusive learning environments.
- The digital divide in India – characterized by significant technological access and literacy disparities – remained a critical concern.
- The technological solutions must be developed with profound cultural sensitivity, ensuring that AI doesn't exacerbate existing social inequalities but instead serves as a levelling mechanism.
- Accountability emerged as a central theme, with panelists proposing robust governance frameworks prioritizing transparency, consent, and ethical considerations.
- Creating AI systems that are not just technically sophisticated but also inherently adaptable to local contexts and responsive to community feedback.
- India not just as a recipient of technological innovation but as a potential global leader in purpose-driven AI development.

Recommendations

- Investing in AI literacy programs for NGO professionals.
- Developing localized AI solutions.
- Establishing multi-stakeholder ethical guidelines were seen as crucial steps. The underlying philosophy was clear: technological advancement must be accompanied by equally sophisticated ethical frameworks that protect individual rights and promote collective well-being.
- India could model a unique approach to technological integration that balances innovation with inclusivity.



Special Session: Mass Digital Exclusions Affecting People's Fundamental Rights

About the session :

This public hearing (Jansunwai) was an act presented by Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR). It also included MNREGA workers who came from different states of India such as Jharkhand, Telangana and Chhatisgarh. The Jansunwai (public hearing) began with citizens posing questions to a government representative. The grievances they highlighted mainly concerned systemic and technological barriers to accessing existing welfare schemes. The 'Janta' began by reporting delays in pension disbursement despite having all the required documents.

This was coupled with biometric failures that were cited as a recurring issue. The government representative frustrated by these problems dismissed the complainant without a solution. A second complainant, a person with a disability, faced similar challenges with no resolution. Another individual raised concern about family members being deleted from ration card records, which has prevented access to welfare schemes. The issue was again named “technology problems,” and hence no corrective measures were offered. Complaints about the impact of digital on unemployment, lack of affordable smartphones, and poor network connectivity preventing attendance marking were met with dismissive responses, with the government representative concluding that only “some people can benefit from these systems, not everyone”.

The inconsistencies in handling Aadhaar-related issues by the representative further highlighted the existing governance gaps and loopholes within the system, as responses of the representative varied arbitrarily between cases, in some cases while Aadhar was not to be taken seriously in other cases it was stated that without Aadhar nothing can be proved. Frustrated by the lack of accountability by the government, a few civil society representatives questioned how digital systems meant to streamline governance were instead creating barriers to basic rights. The session ended with conflict and a song, “*Technology Aayi Ji, Sapne Wad e Layi Ji*,” critiquing corruption, digital exclusion, and systemic failures.

The jansunwai reflected all the issues the citizens encounter in their day to day lives and how their problems are dismissed with incomprehensible answers. This public hearing attempted to highlight that while the citizen welfare schemes and the introduction of digital within the existing systems to implement the same has been positively taken up by the government however without basic infrastructure in place, the technology and digital ecosystem further excludes the very people it claims to benefit and favors the ones who are already privileged. This was followed by a panel discussion on Accountability in Digital Exclusion.

Panel Discussion on Accountability in Digital Exclusion:

This was followed by a panel discussion on the Jansunwai (public hearing) issues, which focused on “**accountability in cases of digital exclusion.**” The panel discussed questions such as who is accountable when exclusion occurs and how accountability can be ensured. The panel featured Soumya Kidambi from Barefoot College, who has been a long-time advocate for RTI; Siddesh Gautam, an artist, writer, activist, and mentor to young people; and Anshul Tewari, founder of Youth Ki Awaaz. Khush moderated the discussion from SAFAR, who began by emphasizing the government’s stated goals of good governance, efficiency, accountability, transparency, and inclusion. The panel discussed how even though mechanisms exist to check corruption, they are not effectively utilized to implement stricter measures. Instead of improving the efficiency of current digital systems, the government introduces new technologies without ensuring adequate infrastructure support. This approach further exacerbates exclusion and also raises concerns about the potential misuse of user data. Therefore, without proper implementation and redressal mechanisms that actually work, the stated claims of the government concerning digital technologies fall flat.

Key Takeaways :

- Digital systems need better infrastructure and grievance redressal mechanisms to ensure inclusion.
- Inconsistent governance responses deepen inequities.
- Civil society plays a critical role in advocating for accountability and efficiency of existing systems.
- Policymakers must also prioritize improving existing systems before introducing and deploying new technologies.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Rakshita Swamy, Shaik Salauddin, Siddhesh Gautam and other participants
(from left to right)

Technical session 8: Rights of Gig Workers over their Data: Rating Nahi Haq Chahiye

About the session:

The session titled “Rating Nahi, Haq Chahiye,” brought to the forefront the rights of gig workers, primarily focusing on their data ownership, working conditions, and lack of unionized labor rights. In this session the gig workers from various platforms shared their stories of digital economy challenges.





Speakers :

- Rakshita Swamy, SAFAR
- Khush Vachhrajani, SAFAR
- Shaik Salauddin, TGPWU
- Mukesh Goswami, MKSS
- Paras Banjara, SAFAR & Rajasthan SR Abhiyan

Key Takeaways:

- Platforms like Uber, Rapido, swiggy, and Zomato have provided employment opportunities to many. However, these jobs often come at a steep personal cost.
- Gig workers narrated their struggles with arbitrary salary deductions and unexpected tax payments.
- The overemphasis on ratings was a recurring theme. A driver's livelihood can depend on a 5-star review, and even slight downgrades may lead to reduced ride assignments or, worse, suspension.
- During the lockdown, workers were expected to meet high targets, putting immense pressure on their physical and mental health.

From the speakers desk:

We need regulations to ensure that data ownership is in the hands of those who create it—the workers.

Rakshita Swamy

A united labour front to address our grievances and secure rights of gig workers.

Shaik Salauddin

From the Gig workers lives:

There are no unions to represent us, and we are entirely at the mercy of the platform's algorithms and policies.

**Amit (name changed),
uber driver**

After completing a ride, we're sometimes left with a fraction of what we expected. There's no transparency in how these cuts are calculated.

**Arif (name changed),
rapido driver**

The advertisements like 'get your food in 5 minutes after order'. These advertisements may attract customers, but they put us under tremendous pressure to deliver quickly, risking our safety and well-being.

**Roshan (name changed),
food delivery person**

Recommendations:

- Transparency in Pay and Policies
 - Platforms must explain salary cuts, tax deductions, and other charges clearly.
 - Workers should have access to detailed breakdowns of their earnings.
- Data Ownership Rights
 - Workers should have control over the data they generate. This includes transparency in how ratings and performance metrics are calculated and used.
- Unionizing and Labor Rights
 - The absence of unions leaves gig workers vulnerable. A collective voice is essential to negotiate fair treatment and better conditions.
 - Companies must acknowledge the physical toll of high targets and long hours. Regular health check-ups and safety provisions should be mandatory.
 - Many participants expressed the need for alternative income sources to reduce dependence on gig work.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Dr.Arпита Kanjilal, Atharva Joshi, Chanukya Patnaik and Rakesh Dubbudu (from left to right) Aindriya Barua and Naveen Singh (virtual from left to right)

Technical session 9: The Power of AI for Social Good: Insights from India's Changemakers

About the session:

The session aimed to explore the concept of “social good” in the context of Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly examining how AI can serve societal causes and contribute to positive social outcomes.



Speakers:

- Rama Lanka Devi, Government of Telangana
- Prabodh Mahajan, SignAssist
- Atharva Joshi, Civis
- Rakesh Dubbudu, Factly
- Aindriya Barua, ShhorAI
- Chanukya Patnaik, AI Planet
- Naveen Singh, PhyFarm

Moderator:

Dr. Arpita Kanjilal, DEF

Key Takeaways:

- A key part of the discussion focused on critical issues such as consent, control over data, and the ethical considerations surrounding the protection of data.
- The importance of understanding why data is valuable and how its management and use can impact vulnerable communities and public policy.
- The panelists brought diverse perspectives, addressing the need for equitable solutions in education, governance, fact-checking, and empowering marginalized groups, all while navigating the complexities of AI technologies.
- AI can be used as a tool for social good and what principles should guide its development and implementation to ensure inclusivity, fairness, and accessibility.

From the Speaker's Desk:

- AI's role is pivotal in organizing and presenting these grievances more effectively, enabling the public to better understand the policies they are addressing.

- AI also helps in engaging with policy by encouraging the public to ask more insightful questions, leading to more informed responses and interactions with policy issues.

**Atharva
Joshi**

- Credibility of information is a key challenge in the digital age, particularly with the spread of misinformation.

- Discussed the global proliferation of fact-checking platforms and how they play a vital role in verifying the accuracy of information.

**Rakesh
Dubuddu**

- Advocated for these perspectives to be integrated within the system's design from the start, rather than being an afterthought.

- The need for a better understanding of the contexts provided by marginalized communities.

**Aindriya
Barua**

- The cause of "AI for social good" resonates deeply, particularly at the grassroots level, where a range of issues need attention.

- While AI cannot address tangible issues, such as the lack of infrastructure, it can ease the burden on human resources, providing support where manpower is limited.

**Chanukya
Patnaik**

- In the education system, where AI was used to recruit students and identify gaps in AI education, helping improve the quality of learning.

- AI and blockchain were applied in agriculture, particularly for women (48%), to make information and infrastructure more accessible to an extremely vulnerable population, both internally and externally.

**Rama
Devi**

- There should be decentralization of data and community ownership of data, with a special focus on vulnerable communities.

- There is potential of AI in decision-making, but there is a critical issue: who is creating AI tools and who benefits from them.

**Naveen
Singh**

Recommendations:

- The importance of having diversity is essentially to tackle bias.
- We need to shift the focus from scalability.
- The need for Human – AI collaboration. If decisions need to be made, they must be in partnership with a subject matter expert.
- We are not at a stage where 100% of decision-making power can be transferred to technology in silos. It also depends on the risk factors of the area of the work.
- We need to be clear about the evaluation strategy, a constantly evolving process and hence something to be mindful about.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Ananya Bhattacharya, Anshul Tewari, Amrita Sengupta (seated left to right),
Radhika Krishnan and Deepak Krishnan (virtually from left to right)

Technical session 10: Thirsty and Power – Hungry? Understanding the environmental Impacts of AI

About the Session:

The panel delved into the environmental impacts of AI technologies, focusing on their vast energy and water consumption. The discussion revolved around the rapid growth of computational power required for AI, the environmental footprint of data centres, and the societal implications of these technologies. Each panelist shared insights into how AI development intersects with environmental sustainability and proposed ways to address its challenges in a socially inclusive and equitable manner.



Speakers:

Amrita Sengupta, CIS

Ananya Bhattacharya, Rest of the World

Professor Radhika Krishnan, IITH

Deepak Krishnan, WRI

Moderator:

Anshul Tewari, YKA

Key Takeaways:

- AI development, particularly the training of large models, requires tremendous computational power.
- The reliance on GPUs (Graphic Processing Units) and other hardware components that drive this energy intensive process.
- The major tech companies like Microsoft and Google are investing heavily in AI infrastructure, further exacerbating energy demands.
- There is significant water consumption associated with cooling data centres. Examples, such as Google's data centre in the Netherlands, which consumes vast amounts of water, and Taiwan, a hub for chip manufacturing, which faces severe water scarcity.
- The focus should be on mitigating their environmental consequences while maintaining innovation.

- The disconnect between AI's potential and its impact on marginalized communities, such as farmers and dairy workers, who often lack access to formal data structures or benefits from AI advancements.
- India is lagging in the global AI and data race. However, this delay could be an advantage, as India can learn from global experiences and build sustainable AI infrastructures from the ground up.
- The industries can align AI development with environmental and societal goals.

From the Speakers desk:

The massive computational scale of AI models like BERT, which uses 100 million parameters, demonstrating the sheer scale of energy and water resources required to train these models.


**Amrita
Sengupta**

The importance should be on aligning corporate strategies with policy frameworks to mitigate AI's environmental and societal impacts effectively.

**Deepak
Krishnan**

The development of green data centers powered by renewable energy and the adoption of sustainable practices in infrastructure. By prioritizing renewable energy sources, India can position itself as a leader in sustainable technology development.

**Ananya
Bhattacharya**

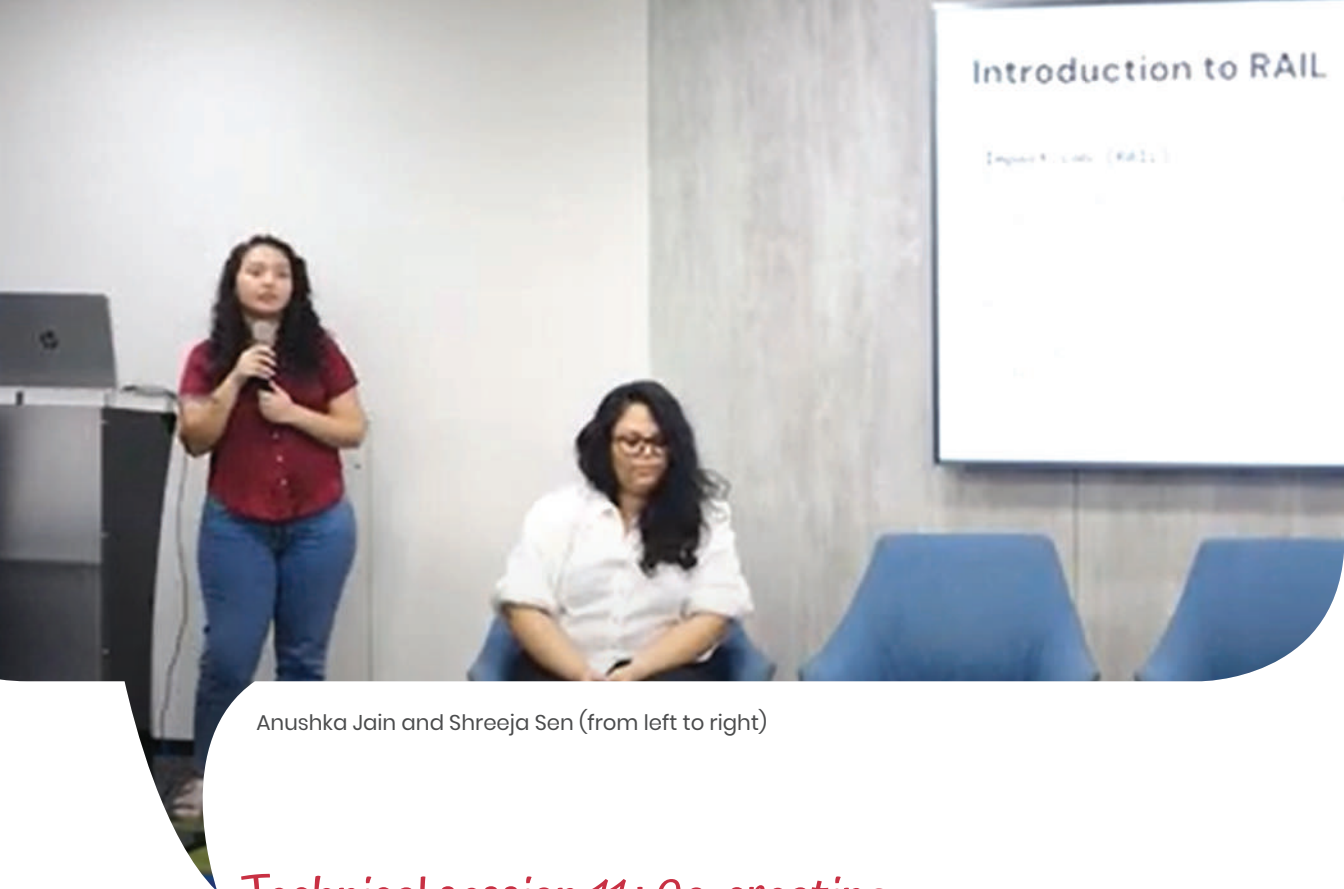


AI disruptions are of two types: social and digital. Social disruptions arise from inequitable access to resources and opportunities, while digital disruptions relate to the challenges of integrating new technologies into existing frameworks.

Professor Radhika Krishnan

Recommendations:

- Proactive adoption of renewable energy sources for AI infrastructures.
- Development of sustainable data centres that minimise energy and water consumption.
- Implementation of localized and inclusive policies to address environmental and social challenges.
- Enhanced transparency and accountability in corporate and governmental actions.
- Encouragement of participatory decision-making processes to ensure equitable outcomes.



Anushka Jain and Shreeja Sen (from left to right)

Technical session 11: Co-creating Responsible AI Principles for India: Building on Learnings from DFL' RAIL Fellowship

About the workshop:

The workshop on Responsible AI sought to deepen participants' understanding of how AI can be deployed ethically and responsibly, especially in grassroots initiatives like Meri Sakhi. This session introduced RAIL (Responsible AI Impact Labs) and outlined its objectives to ensure that AI technologies are used to empower marginalised communities while maintaining transparency, accountability, and fairness.



Key Activities and Learnings:

- Participants engaged in discussions and activities to assess how responsible AI practices can be implemented in community-driven programs, specifically looking at data policies and AI literacy for the Meri Sakhi initiative.
- The workshop equipped the participants with the tools needed to integrate responsible AI principles into their work, ensuring that the technology is effective and ethically aligned with the needs and values of the communities it serves.
- The workshop provided insights into how the RAIL Fellowship is structured, emphasizing the importance of instructional modules designed to assess and address the organizational needs and capacities surrounding AI implementation.
- During the workshop, participants were engaged in an interactive exercise where they were tasked with identifying key features to be included in two important areas for the Meri Sakhi initiative:
- The five key features that should be included in a data collection, processing, and storage policy for Meri Sakhi.
- The five key features that should be incorporated into an AI literacy curriculum for the program.
- This exercise was designed to foster collaborative thinking and to align AI-related initiatives with the needs of local communities and organisations.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Gomer Padong on the dias, Akhmat Safrudin and Catherine Tionsgon (joined online)

Technical session 12: Wired for Life: Community -Centered Connectivity and Innovations

Speakers:

- Catherine Tionsgon, LocNet
- Akhmat Safrudin, LocNet
- Gomer Padong, ISEA

About the session: In the panel discussion, the focus was on the importance of addressing gender issues in community-centered connectivity initiatives, sharing various models and experiences from different regions, particularly in Asia. The speakers highlighted the need for local support, capacity building, and collaboration among stakeholders to enhance technology access for marginalized groups. This session “Wired for Life: Community-Centered



Connectivity and Innovations” highlighted groundbreaking efforts to bridge digital divides using community-driven solutions in Asia. Hosted by key members of the Local Networks Initiative under the Association for Progressive Communications and APNIC Foundation, the discussion showcased transformative connectivity projects in Indonesia and the Philippines. Speakers emphasised the importance of community-centred connectivity through innovative frameworks like —focusing on affordability, low energy use, ease of maintenance, and local support. Real-world examples included AI and IoT-powered weather stations in Indonesia to support agriculture and climate resilience, and a smart coffee roasting system in the Philippines, which empowered farmers and women entrepreneurs. The session also introduced the School of Community Networks, which has trained hundreds of participants in digital literacy, IoT applications, and disaster mitigation, promoting sustainable infrastructure with local resources like bamboo towers and solar power.

Key Takeaways:

- Connectivity is both a consequence and cause of broader inequality.
- If we want to achieve our goal of fairer digital future , we need to ensure meaningful connectivity among peoples and gender.
- There is a need for gender integration into community centered initiatives.
- Addressing gender issues is crucial for ensuring equitable access to technology and resources.
- There was a consensus on the effectiveness of community-centered approaches in implementing connectivity initiatives. Engaging local stakeholders and understanding community dynamics were highlighted as essential for success.
- The different models show provided potential of how CCCI can and support women participation and meaningful connectivity.

- One of the example of Community Network and Social Enterprise Model in Bangladesh focused on marginalised women artisans in Cox's Bazar, providing digital literacy and e-commerce training. Established as a cellular router system to facilitate internet access and improve economic conditions. This reported significant increases in revenue for women artisans, with some experiencing income increases of up to 7.5 times.
- One of the example of Community Network in Indonesia is of a mesh network to provide internet access in disaster-prone areas. This network brought the importance of local support and collaboration among stakeholders to enhance sustainability and resilience.

Key Models Discussed:

Community Network and Social Enterprise Model in Bangladesh:

- Implemented by the Foundation for Architecture and Community Equity, focusing on marginalised women artisans.
- Established a cellular router system linked to a major mobile operator, facilitating online and offline connectivity.
- Provided training in digital literacy, e-commerce, and product development, leading to increased income and improved market access.

Community Network Initiative in Indonesia:

- Managed by the Common Room Foundation and other stakeholders, utilizing a mesh network built on bamboo towers.
- Created a hub-and-spoke network with public Wi-Fi hotspots, enhancing connectivity and enabling better disaster management.
- Resulted in improved economic conditions, increased online trading, and greater community resilience.

From the speakers Desk:

AI advancements can deepen existing inequalities, addressing digital inclusion is vital for access to technology.

Gomer Padong

Community Networks and AI integration can bring transformative change by combining community knowledge with technology.

Akhmat Safrudin

The nexus of gender and connectivity is a space where we can maximise our interventions as development workers and digital activists.

Catherine Tiongson

Recommendations:

- **Empowerment through Connectivity:** The session underscored the critical role of connectivity in empowering marginalized communities, particularly women.
- **Collaboration and Capacity Building:** Emphasised the need for local support, capacity building, and collaboration among various stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of connectivity initiatives.
- **Addressing Gender Inequality:** Highlighted the necessity of integrating gender considerations into technology access and community development efforts.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Nina Bual and Michelle Yao (from left to right)

Technical session 13: Supporting Educators for Generative AI safely and responsibly

About the workshop:

In this insightful lightning session at the Digital Citizen Summit 2024, Nina Bual from Cyberlite delves into equipping educators with the tools to harness generative AI in a safe and effective manner. Highlighting the importance of AI literacy, the workshop demonstrates how generative AI can transform classroom experiences for both teachers and students. Nina shares practical insights into how AI can assist educators in personalising learning, supporting neurodiverse students, and simplifying complex concepts. From creating practice questions to generating study guides, educators are encouraged to see AI as a co-pilot for enhancing productivity and engagement. This hands-on session focuses on prompt engineering, teaching participants to craft precise and

effective AI queries for better results. By demystifying AI and addressing concerns around its ethical use, the session empowers teachers to prepare students for a future where AI literacy is key to success. Nina also emphasizes the need for responsible AI adoption, balancing its immense potential with a focus on safe and constructive applications. This engaging workshop leaves educators equipped to lead their students confidently in the era of AI.

Key Activities and Learnings:

- AI is your copilot, and you are the captain. Your curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking will steer this aircraft.
- Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an exciting frontier in technology, building on decades of research in the broader field of AI.
- At its core, generative AI is a sub-branch of artificial intelligence that's capable of generating new content such as texts, images, videos, or even coding! It does so by learning patterns from existing data and understanding the context and intent of language.
- Generative AI tools can produce fascinating and imaginative creations, making it a powerful tool that's used by various professions.
- To interact with a generative AI model, we need to give it clear and concise instructions called prompts. Being able to craft prompts to get the AI to generate your desired outputs is an extremely useful skill to master. But there is no such thing as a perfect prompt – it takes lots of practice and experimentation to get it right! The process of refining these instructions is called prompt engineering.
- Generative AI tools such as LLMs may seem like superheroes in certain tasks, but they do have their limitations, particularly in terms of privacy. A golden safety rule to live by is never sharing personally identifiable information, whether it's about yourself or someone else, with generative AI models, unknown individuals, or untrusted sites.
- Generative AI tools may at times generate biased outputs.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Dr. Prashant Narnaware, Dr. Neha Gupta, Prof. (Rtd) Sachidanand Sinha and Prof. Abdul Shaban (from left to right), Prof. Christian Handke, Dr. Markha Valenta, Juan Angel Demerutis Arenas and Dr Zinat Aboli (joined online)

Technical session 14: Data Ethics: Individual and Social Risks in Technologically Mediated Market, State and Identities

Speakers:

1. Prof. Christian Handke, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands (online)
2. Dr. Markha Valenta, Assistant Professor, University College Utrecht (online)
3. Juan Angel Demerutis Arenas, Director, University Centre for Art, Architecture and Design, University of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico (online)
4. Dr Zinat Aboli (University of Paris City, Paris) (online)



5. Dr Prashant Narnaware (IAS), Commissioner, Women and Child Development, Government of Maharashtra, Pune, (in person)
6. Dr Neha Gupta, Postdoctoral Fellow, Regional Futures, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai (in person)
7. Professor (Rtd) Sachidanand Sinha, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (in person)
8. Professor Abdul Shaban, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai (in person)

About the session:

Digitalisation has spurred datafication. Social media, private and even government agencies use public and private information indiscriminately, resulting in contradictory outcomes such as social and individual inclusion and exclusion, as well as potentially long-run negative externalities. The State's response to this situation and data protection has acquired several forms: being *overwhelmed and incapacitated* due to lack of institutional capacities; *regulating in piecemeal ways*, with significant gaps in certain sectors; and becoming *embedded in corporate and market* dynamics, which facilitates the availability of information rather than meaningful regulation. This approach can prove counterproductive to the well-being of the larger society, specific groups and individuals. State failure in this regard also undermines market efficiency, as copyright violations lead to revenue losses for producers and the state.

This panel discussion explored these issues in a multi-country context, focusing on (a) the sources and breaches of information, (b) state regulation, (c) data ethics and market agents, and (d) the consequences for citizenship, belonging and development.



Akanksha Ahluwalia, Dr. Madhavi Ravikumar, Prof. Atul Negi and Prof. Salman Moiz (from left to right)

Technical session 15: The Future of Digital Society

Speakers:

- Professor Atul Negi, School of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad
- Professor Salman Moiz, School of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad
- Dr. Madhavi Ravikumar, Department of Communication, University of Hyderabad

Moderator:

Akanksha Ahluwalia, DEF



About the session:

The panel discussion began with a focus on the balance between online and offline interactions, emphasising the importance of not being overly reliant on digital platforms. A speaker shares anecdotes from the “WhatsApp Academy”, illustrating how technology influences family dynamics, such as a mother controlling dinner time through Wi-Fi access. The conversation then shifts to the implications of online relationships, highlighting a couple who met and married online but later realised their incompatibility, raising questions about the depth of digital engagements.

Philosophical reflections on reality are introduced, referencing the film “The Matrix” and Indian philosophical concepts like “Maya,” prompting the audience to consider whether they are living in a simulated reality. Most of the panelists noted that the current generation is an experimental field for technology, sharing surprising insights from a classroom where a significant number of students were not on social media, citing mental health concerns.

Key Takeaways:

- The balance between online and offline engagement for citizens.
- The impact of technology on family dynamics and relationships needs to be studied .
- There needs to be philosophical reflections on reality and technology.
- There is a growing concern on generational perspectives on social media and mental health.
- The importance should be given to community engagement and relevant content creation.
- There is urgent need for basic services for the marginalised communities.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Nilay Shah, Shruti Narayan, Syed Mohammed Haroon (seated from left to right), Swineryy (onscreen)

Technical session 16: Shadow Banning : How Should Platforms Govern the Flow of Speech and Information?

Speakers:

- Syed Mohammed Haroon, SFLC
- Shruti Narayan, Access Now
- Swineryy, Content Creator

Moderator:

Nilay Shah, SFLC



About the session:

Social media has exploded in South Asia, changing how people connect and find information. But there's a dark side: shadow banning. This means platforms can secretly limit how many people see your content. This raises big questions on how platforms can govern free speech online, and whether it amounts to excessive censorship.

This discussion delved into the murky world of shadow banning. The panel had diverse views and inputs on policy programs of intermediaries as well as content creators to delve deeper into their observations on shadow banning. Swineryy through their real-life experiences showed how shadow banning works and what it means for people who create content on these platforms.

The panel delved into the rulebooks of these platforms. What are their rules/internal guidelines on shadow banning? How clear are such these rules, and do they inform users what limitations might be put on their content? By understanding the justifications platforms give for shadow banning, we can see how it affects our freedom to speak our minds online.

The way these platforms sort and show content is a big part of the story. This often involves complex computer programs called algorithms. There were discussions around how these algorithms work and whether they might be biased, accidentally hiding some points of view while promoting others. Figuring out how the technical side works is key to understanding shadow banning fully.

Free speech is a major concern. Is shadow banning a kind of censorship, shutting down important voices? Or is it a tool platform need to fight misinformation and disinformation, making online discussions healthier? The panel had a balanced discussion, weighing the pros and cons of shadow banning and how it might have a chilling effect on free speech.

Finding the balance between user freedom and keeping harmful content off platforms is a constant struggle. Platforms often govern themselves but can shadow banning be an effective measure to manage content? What other ways could platforms create a safe and responsible online environment?

Finally, the big question of bias was addressed: Does shadow banning unfairly target certain types of content or users? The panel explored the justifications behind shadow banning and whether platforms need to be more transparent and accountable for the same.

Key Takeaways:

- The impact of shadow banning on free speech online.
- Analysis of shadow banning as an effective solution to curb the flow of misinformation and disinformation.
- Identifying effective policy solutions that balance the fundamental right to free speech with the prevention of misinformation.

Reports & Book Launches









Osama Manzar, Sumaiya Khan, Anshul Tewari, Amitabh Kumar and Mili Dangwal (from left to right)

Discussion on Youth, Digital Narratives and Algorithm

Report Launch

Celebrating the Transformative Journey of Becoming Digital Change Leaders: Imprints of Change – The Digital Journey to Swaraj Book Launch, Edited by Dr. Arpita Kanjilal and Ashwini Shah [Click Here to Read](#)

And

Navigating Through Digital and Social Realities: Stories of Struggle, Hope and Resilience Edited by Anuska Roy, Siddharth Shankar and Ritika Bhatia [Click Here to Read](#)



During the Digital Citizen Summit, Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) launched two books related to digital and youth . The first one being “Imprints of Change: The Digital Journey to Swaraj”. Launched by Osama Manzar, founder of DEF and Anshul Tewari, founder of Youth ki Awaaz (YKA), this book is a testament to the transformative journey and impact of the Digital Swaraj Fellowship. The book is an anthology of experiences, learnings and insights shared by Fellows of Cohort 2023-2024, who have been at the forefront of digital inclusion and empowerment across India’s diverse landscapes. The book captures the essence of the Fellowship program into two parts: In Part One: Digital Swaraj in Action, stories of grassroots change unfold through the narratives of Maitri Singh, Mili Dangwal, Pratiksha Kamble, Puntti Kumari, Shrishti Sinha, Swati Tiwari, and Vikas Chinchkar. Each chapter highlights unique initiatives that reflect the power of digital tools in promoting a citizen and community-centric development and building an inclusive and resilient digital ecosystem. Part Two: Fellows ki Duniya: Notes from the Field offers deeper insights into the Fellows’ personal journeys. From digital odysseys to bridging urban-rural divides, the one-year fellowship journey showcases the challenges and triumphs of nurturing and creating a generation of digital changemakers, leaders and experts in the digital and development sector.

The second book is a powerful collaboration between the Digital Empowerment Foundation and Youth Ki Awaz, capturing the lived experiences of India’s youth as they navigate the digital landscape. Featuring 30 compelling stories in English and Hindi from young authors across diverse regions, the book delves into pressing issues surrounding digital rights, safety, and inclusivity.



Sonia Jorge, Lauren Grubbs, Jenny Sulfath, Nitesh Bharadwaj, Saleem Razvi and Upasana Hembram (from left to right)

Report Launch: Connected Resilience: Gendered Experiences of Meaningful Connectivity through a Global Pandemic

About Session:

This session was inspired by GDIP's report – Connected Resilience : Gendered Experiences of Meaningful Connectivity through a Global Pandemic . The findings of the reports were presented including a special focus on India followed by a panel discussion on solutions to address the Gender Digital Divide in Asia.

Speakers :

- Jenny Sulfath, DEF
- Saleema Razvi, Copenhagen Consensus



- Nitesh Bharadwaj, Aadiwasi Janjaguti
- Upasana Hembram, ISOC Foundation
- Lauren Grubbs, USAID

Moderator:

Sonia Jorge, GDIP

About the report:

Yet, too many women, too many of the world's impoverished, and too many people living in rural communities remain unconnected, under-connected, and left behind. The stubbornness of the digital divide remains a constant undercurrent. Just as policymakers continue to anticipate fourth industrial revolutions and digital transformations from these technologies, millions of people have yet to benefit. In the research on meaningful connectivity through the pandemic, the hope — in the resilience of people living in marginalized communities and in the potential for policy actions that leverage opportunities to support people's everyday lives. The frontier of digital inclusion policy lies in people-centred solutions. Over the past few years, it has become clear that meaningful connectivity is now a basic requirement for all. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the world. The insights highlight that — without substantial policy interventions to close the digital divide — countries are on track to lose over USD \$500 billion in the next five years, essentially repeating economic losses. that can empower everyone. This requires conscious efforts that put community consultation and community leadership front and centre in the decision-making process, moving away from siloed interventions that are often top-down and driven by external motivations.

The panel discussion addressed gaps in data concerning women's access to and use of digital technology. The challenges faced in policy advocacy for digital inclusion and how emerging technologies or innovations can overcome these challenges hold the most promise for advancing women's digital inclusion.

[Watch Video Here](#)

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Radhika Sarin and Sonia Jorge (from left to right)

Special Session 3: Wi-DEF - Launching the India Round of Grants to Close the Gender Digital Divide

Speakers:

- Sonia Jorge, GDIP
- Radhika Sarin, GSMA

About the Launch: In the lightning talk, Radhika Sarin introduced the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF), highlighting its objective to bridge the gender digital divide by promoting women's access to digital tools and



opportunities in India. She outlined key aspects of the grant, including eligibility criteria, which focus on local small and medium-sized for-profits and non-profits with valid FCRA registration.

Radhika also emphasized the five focus areas of WiDEF: improving access and affordability, creating relevant digital tools, fostering digital literacy and skills, enhancing online safety, and supporting gender-focused research. She shared essential deadlines and encouraged organizations with innovative projects to apply. The presentation highlighted WiDEF's role in empowering women through digital inclusion and economic participation.

[Watch Video Here](#)

JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

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Special Issue: Technology and Society
Guest Editor: Osama Manzar


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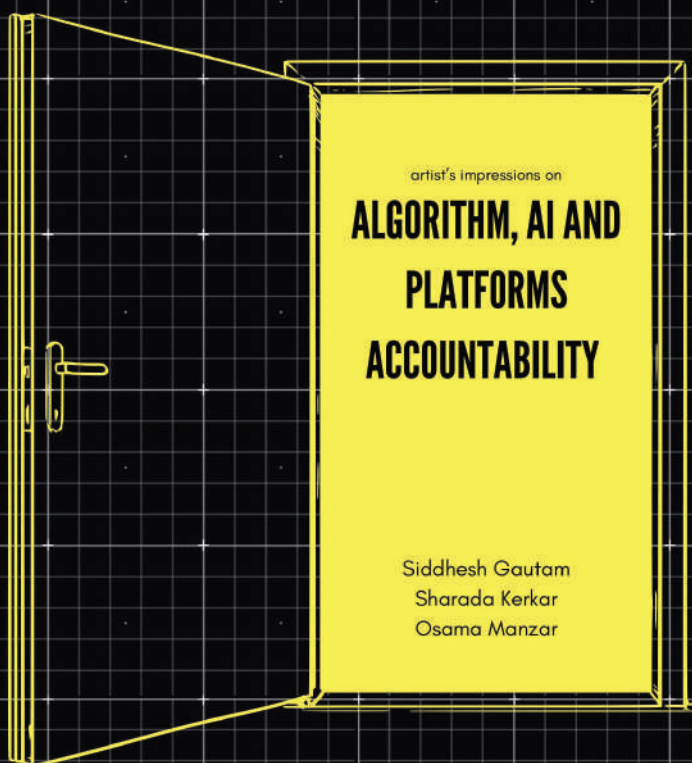


*Journal Special Issue Release: Volume 10,
Issue 1 Special Issue on Technology and
Society, Guest Edited by Osama Manzar
in Journal of Development Policy and
Practice*



In Digital Citizen Summit, the Special Issue on Technology and Society Guest Edited by Osama Manzar in *Journal Of Development Policy and Practice* was released which contains research work and articles which were presented in Digital Citizen Summit 2023. This issue of the Journal of Development Policy and Practice brings together a diverse range of perspectives on the complex interplay between technology and society. As digital technologies continue to reshape our world, it is imperative that we critically examine their impact on democratic processes, justice systems, marginalised communities, and individual autonomy. The articles featured in this issue offer valuable insights into these pressing issues and underscore the need for thoughtful public policy that balances innovation with ethical considerations.

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A-CODE

Art and Collective for Digital Empowerment

Special Release: Artists Impressions
on Algorithm, AI and Platform
Accountability by Siddhesh Gautam,
Sharada Kerkar and Osama Manzar,
compiled by A-CODE (Art and Collective
for Digital Empowerment)



This small book is a compilation of artistic impressions capturing the experiences of the current generation—navigating algorithm-driven apps, programs, and platformization, all without accountability. While half the world suffers from lack of connectivity and digital exclusion, the other half is burdened by datafication. This is an alpha version, with plans for new editions to be released every six months, featuring additional contributions from more artists.

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Lightning Talks

India's Digital Capitalism by Professor Abdul Shaban, TISS Mumbai

The talk focused on India's transition to digital capitalism, examining the interplay of platformisation, datafication, and their socio-economic implications. The speaker discussed how this shift drives economic growth, creates monopolistic tendencies, and influences labour markets, mainly through the gig economy and artificial intelligence. The global economy is becoming increasingly dominated by digital platforms. The shift towards large-scale data-driven decision-making and cloud computing is reshaping the economy. However, there are still questions about who benefits from the profits and how wealth is distributed. Automation and AI bring risks for workers, especially those in lower-paying jobs, as these technologies could displace them. Concerns about safety, privacy, and union representation are more important than ever. Meanwhile, profits tend to be siphoned off by intermediaries instead of going to the actual producers, creating a sort of digital feudalism. India aims to have 20% of its economy in the digital sector by 2028, spurred by advancements like 5G. Still, most of this growth is happening in major cities, increasing regional inequalities. Major players like TCS, Infosys, and Reliance Jio are driving this digital boom, playing a huge role in shaping India's future. Policies should focus on redistributing the benefits of digital growth to reduce regional and social disparities.



Combating TFGBV: Enhancing Online Safety and Security for All by Hayley Pottle and Lauren Grubb

In this talk the speakers highlighted the pressing issue of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) and its significant impact on women's safety and rights in our increasingly digital world. Ms. Lauren emphasized the urgent need for awareness and action regarding this growing concern. Ms. Lauren defined TFGBV as violence that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified through the use of information and communication technologies, disproportionately affecting women, girls, and gender non-conforming individuals.

During the presentation, Hayley shared alarming statistics: 38% of women with internet access have personally experienced online violence, while 85% have witnessed digital violence against other women. She pointed out that the rise of generative AI has exacerbated the situation, with 96% of deepfakes being non-consensual sexual content. She also discussed how, while almost all women experience or witness some form of digital violence, those in the public eye—such as politicians, journalists, and activists—are particularly vulnerable. Additionally, she highlighted that LGBTQI+ individuals and youth face heightened risks. The threats women encounter online are often gendered, frequently targeting their sexuality, bodies, and gender.

Lauren outlined various forms of TFGBV, including online harassment and abuse, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, cyberstalking, sextortion, doxxing, and malicious deepfakes. I stressed that this violence is a continuum that can manifest in multiple interrelated forms—and also addressed the broader impact of TFGBV, noting that it has a chilling effect on women's participation in public life. For instance, she shared that 30% of women journalists reported self-censoring after experiencing online violence, which leads to a significant loss of diverse voices in media and public discourse.

They are essential in discussing why this issue matters,

framing TFGBV as a symptom and a driver of the Gender Digital Divide (GDD). The inequitable power dynamics and harmful social and gender norms that underpin TFGBV not only reflect existing inequalities but also perpetuate them. Fear of digital violence and unfamiliarity with technology can prevent women from accessing digital tools, either by opting out themselves or as a result of others prohibiting them. This creates a cycle where women are further marginalized in the digital space, limiting their opportunities and voices. To combat TFGBV, Hayley emphasized the need for comprehensive strategies, highlighting initiatives like the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF), which aim to address critical areas such as access, affordability, digital literacy, and safety..

In conclusion, Lauren reiterated the urgent need to address Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence. As we navigate the complexities of the digital age, it is essential to recognize the unique challenges women and marginalized communities face. By advocating for online safety, supporting funding initiatives, and fostering a culture of respect and equality, we can work towards a safer digital environment for all. In the end, they summarized the presentation in this way.

Uli as a participatory approach to building AI Datasets by Kaustubha Kalindi

Kaustubha Kalindi from Tattle discussed Uli as a browser plugin designed to redact slur words in Indian languages. The project aimed to tackle the fatigue caused by constant exposure to abusive language, particularly content that targets vulnerable groups, including those who have experienced violence. By focusing on abusive and explicit language, Tattle sought to create a more supportive digital environment. What set this initiative apart was its participatory approach to building an AI dataset, where annotations were carried out not by non-experts but by experts with backgrounds in gender studies. The annotators were financially remunerated and made aware of their work's integrity and significance. Building on this success,

Tattle's next effort was to expand its scope to include various forms of content, such as videos and images, to further reduce harmful online interactions. Uli started off a browser plugin, it redacts slur words in Indian Languages. It was an attempt at a participatory method of building an AI dataset. The attempt was to try and reduce the fatigue of constantly being exposed to abusive language towards certain groups. Such as people who have experienced violence, content that contains explicit or abusive language. The USP is the fact that the annotation was not done by non-experts but from experts in the field of research, who have worked in spaces of gender studies. Annotators were remunerated financially, but they were also made aware of the integrity of the work

Human -centered AI : From code to community by Siddhartha Malempati

Siddhartha Malempati's perspective on artificial intelligence (AI) offers a critical examination of the intersection between technology, power, and social justice. He argues that the decisions made in the 20th century, particularly around technology and data, will have lasting impacts in the 21st century, shaping our world in profound ways. In his discussion, he introduces five key truths about AI and its role in reinforcing global inequalities, which he describes as modern-day digital colonialism. Siddhartha advocates for a decentralised approach to AI, emphasising the need for local models that prioritise data sovereignty, preserve cultural identities, and democratise decision-making. His work challenges the dominance of global tech giants, proposing that technology should be developed by the people, for the people, to empower marginalised communities and preserve local economic and cultural autonomy.

"The weight of the decisions of the 20th century will be carried by the 21st century." Siddhartha emphasised that the choices and actions of the past, particularly in terms of technology, will continue to affect future generations. He argued that algorithms, which now govern much of our digital world, are controlled by entities beyond human oversight, dictating the flow of data and shaping global systems in ways that often escape public awareness and control.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Addressing Bias and Discrimination: Building Responsible AI with Big Data by Rahul Paith

Rahul Paith, CEO of MATH, delivered the thought-provoking lightning session to delve into the critical issue of bias and discrimination in AI systems and the role of big data in fostering responsible innovation. The session highlights how biases can seep into AI models at multiple levels—data collection, design, and societal usage—resulting in flawed outcomes that impact healthcare, recruitment, and financial systems. Through examples in healthcare diagnostics, hiring systems, and fintech solutions, he demonstrated how biased data can perpetuate inequalities, misdiagnosis, and flawed decisions. The talk underlined the significance of ecosystems such as MATH in creating the supporting environment for AI development and solving the complex issues that concern startups. He also stressed the importance of integrating efforts between government, corporates, and startups to foster the AI ecosystem and effectively dedicate efforts towards advancing both the technical and ethical aspects of AI applications.

The talk also highlighted the fact that combating bias in data is a communal problem that does not end with the data scientist or the engineer alone. In other words, an increased understanding of social responsibilities and support for amassing and checking for bias-free data will reduce the probability of discriminating with AI outcomes.

Furthermore, the talk also explained the work MATH has done in addressing some of AI's major points, which include data, computing, expertise, and markets. Lean resources such as being home to India's most extensive public data set and substantial cloud credits for Indian startups mean that MATH is a crucial component of domestic innovation and the international AI strategy.

Rahul Paith called on stakeholders in different industries to embrace more ethical methods in the development of artificial intelligence and close the gap in biases to the best of their ability to provide better end products. Reflecting on this conversation ensured that correcting these impressions

will be a critical path toward achieving the most significant potential of AI applications for addressing various societal problems with fair and accountable means.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Digital Public Goods in the Age of AI: Ensuring Meaningful Connectivity and Inclusion by Varnika

In this enlightening talk Varnika from Pratham Books StoryWeaver talked about the transformative role of Digital Public Goods (DPGs) in the AI era which takes center stage. She delved into how DPGs like open-licensed content and tools can bridge gaps in literacy, language diversity, and access to educational resources, particularly in underserved communities. Highlighting the pioneering efforts of StoryWeaver, the talk underscored the importance of empowering creators and communities to tell their own stories, ensuring representation and inclusivity. As the conversation progresses, the challenges and opportunities presented by AI are explored, from fostering creative ecosystems to enhancing user-centric algorithms and interfaces. Varnika emphasises the need for ethical AI deployment, advocating for transparency, fairness, and the prioritization of community needs in technology development. The talk concluded with a call to action: leveraging AI to sustain DPGs while keeping community empowerment and meaningful connectivity at the forefront. This is a must-watch for those committed to harnessing AI for social good and bridging the digital divide.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Digital Transformation & Labour: Continuity and Change by Professor Anirban Dasgupta

The talk addressed the multiplicity of digital technology-added dimensions of labour in the Indian scenario. The talk

focused on labour market within the context of technological change, mainly digital disruption to employment and job creation. Addressing these changes, Professor Anirban Dasgupta roots them in the historical dynamics of labour-technology relations and discusses the problems of India's digital and informal workforce. This talk also looked at the organizational features associated with the Indian labour market, where there is a surplus of labour in agriculture, informal sector employment, and growth of gig employment, along with how automation and artificial intelligence (AI) can affect employment and workforce profile. Professor Anirban Dasgupta also highlighted how digitization, the labour market, and the economy's structure are linked in India's context. On the one hand, digital technology allows companies to progress and create new jobs; on the other hand, it further worsens informality, job automation, and income disparity. He recommended that more subtlety be applied to these problems, pointing out that digitization has to be preceded by stringent policy measures.

One of the significant lessons to learn about gig or informal digital workers is conceptualizing them as part of a diverse labour system. Solving them implies making systemic changes that exclude focusing on the specific technologies the two groups work with. The lack of such steps poses the concern of neo-employment, where employment in India remains low security and low productivity even within the contemporary digital economic environments.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Mainstreaming Accessibility in Digital Transformation in Indonesia by Rahma Utami

This talk about the mainstreaming of digital accessibility in Indonesia was delivered by Rahma Utami from Suarise. According to her there are 3 types of disability in terms of accessibility. They are: Permanent, Situational and Temporary Disability. Mainstreaming is the collectiveness of awareness and actions. If there are no collective actions or awareness,

then the exclusivity of mainstreaming would be missing. To be in the collective awareness and actions, she said that we should have the trends i.e., Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and we should have Top down like reinforcement. Trends are temporary and if it is not cool enough, it will not create any impact on people. For Top Down, Indonesia has no regulations. So, without these two, mainstreaming is impossible. These two can be used through transcendence.

On focusing on Digital accessibility she referred to how usable a website or application or any other digital experience is by all possible users regardless of their ability and disability, with or without assistive technology. Digital accessibility enables the community to search, find, access, and explore independently. The word “independently” is used because most of the population in Indonesia is disabled and they always need help from caregivers. That is why, people wait to receive info rather than proactively participating and finding it out. This waiting time drags every process lately.

For solutions, Rahma demonstrated two of their initiatives :

Empathy lab pop-up experience

They collaborated with 2 universities. Volunteers were also there and they created 50 scenarios. People will come and talk about their disability and they will be asked to do some activities so that their experience will be clearly understood. In urban areas also, such a program was held. 10 scenarios were created. It involves volunteers also. In this program, they tried the level of accessibility of the blind people community. This was done to include everyone in the digital accessibility platform. This program had happened 7 times in 5 cities with 64 volunteers, and more than 700 people, and received 402 feedbacks.

Accessibility Bootcamp

This boot camp was conducted for 3 months. Blind women were taught how to use screen readers and how people bring a scarf to close their eyes. They worked with Apple

Academy. This program has happened with 40 participants in 3 cities with more than 150 people (both men and women).

Rahma concluded by highlighting the two important unfinished plans which are : Crowd-source accessibility Reporting Program in Bally Island and a designing challenge in Ally that aimed to resolve problems.

[Watch Video Here](#)

Mapping Algorithmic Infrastructures: Understanding the Data Supply Chain and Auditability of AI in Healthcare in India by Amrita Sengupta

In this talk, Amrita Sengupta talked about a recent study where the aim was to understand the prevalence and use of AI auditing practices in the healthcare sector. By mapping the data supply chain underlying AI technologies, the study focused on unpacking: how AI systems are developed and deployed to achieve healthcare outcomes and more importantly how AI audits are perceived and implemented by key stakeholders in the healthcare ecosystems. AI systems in healthcare are used for Imaging based diagnosis, primary health consultations, Administration and management, Automated care services, Drug discovery and Epidemiology. AI audits are ways to evaluate complex systems and processes to determine if they comply with organisational, industrial and regulatory goals and standards. AI audits have prominent frameworks like – Algorithmovigilance, Ethical AI framework and Medical Algorithmic Audit. She talked about the findings of the report as: All stakeholders rely on both open and proprietary data, there is reliance on datasets from the global north, there are vast differences between technology companies and healthcare institutions when it came to looking into imbalances in datasets. Following PII (Personally Identification Information) protocols and anonymisation as important priority for all stakeholders. However, there are still apprehensions amongst medical professionals to trust AI systems and there is also lack of

training and education of professionals in the use of AI in healthcare. Lastly, she concluded by recommendations along the lines of improving data management across the AI Data Supply Chain by building standardised data sharing policies and emphasising on not just data quantity but also data quality. India should focus on ensuring equitable distribution in AI spending and associated benefits by also investing in AI life cycles instead of just at the point of initial development.



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Handloom and Handcrafted | Made by Artisans |
Curated with Love | Digital Development | Digital
Integration | Digital Cluster Development



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Integration | Digital Cluster Development



THE MARVEL



Paper Presentation Track

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
Anwesha Sen	Big Brother is Watching You: Exploring the Compatibility of Biometric Surveillance Technologies with Human Rights	<p>This paper examines the compatibility of biometric surveillance technologies with human rights, supported by an analysis of the use cases of such technologies in India. At this time, biometric technologies play a vital role in verifying one's identity which is then used to determine their access to public services. This opens up individuals to a variety of harms and in the case of false results, could block them from accessing public services, resulting in human rights violations. The prevalence of using biometric technologies in India is analyzed through an in-depth study of India's socio-political context and the civic-tech ecosystem. Journal articles, news articles, policy documents, and policy reviews have been used to do content analysis and define terms,</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		set the context, and highlight the limitations and harms of biometric technologies. The paper argues that biometric surveillance technologies are inherently incompatible with human rights due to the fact that machines, which are fallible and contain inherent bias, are being depended upon to verify a person's identity and determine their access to public services. This is even more concerning given that one cannot legally challenge a biometric system and such technologies are being developed and deployed at a rapid rate, exacerbating existing human rights violations.
Adil Raseef	Cities of Tomorrow: Scope of AI and Technology in Urban Indian Context	As Indian cities face poly-crisis challenges, including rapid urbanisation, climate change, and outdated infrastructure, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced technologies emerges as a critical solution for sustainable urban development. This paper explores the

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>transformative potential of AI in urban planning, governance, and resilience, using case studies from both global and Indian contexts. It highlights how AI-driven systems can optimise resource management, enhance public safety, and improve the quality of life for urban residents by enabling data-driven decision-making and personalised city services. The paper also examines the obstacles to AI adoption in India, such as the lack of high-quality data, digital infrastructure, and technical expertise. Despite these challenges, recent government initiatives and investments in AI research offer promising pathways for integrating AI into the fabric of urban governance. By addressing the technological, societal, and ethical implications of AI, this paper provides a comprehensive overview of how Indian cities can leverage AI to meet future urbanisation demands and create more resilient, efficient, and liveable environments.</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
Braja Sundar Nayak	Modern Slavery in the Platform Economy: A Study of On-Demand Food Delivery Industry in Mumbai	<p>In recent years, the global workforce has experienced a significant transformation due to the digital revolution and the rise of the platform economy. This paradigm shift has fundamentally altered traditional notions of employment and work relationships. Platform-based gig workers face precarious working conditions, including inconsistent pay, erratic scheduling, lack of employee benefits, and unstable contracts (L. Kalleberg et al., 2017).</p> <p>This precariousness is further exacerbated by the individualization of platform-based labour, which hinders their collective action and unionization (De Stefano, 2015) One prominent characteristic of modern work arrangements is the prevalence of piecemeal tasks, where workers contribute to fragmented parts of a larger product or service, often with little control over the entire process (Atzeni, 2014).</p> <p>This labour fragmentation grants significant power to</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>platform owners, enabling them to easily replace workers and maintain a flexible workforce. Many individuals, due to a lack of specialized skills, find themselves trapped in low-paying jobs with limited opportunities for advancement, perpetuating cycles of social immobility and economic insecurity (Frenken et al., 2020). A quintessential example of this fragmented labour structure is the food delivery industry, where restaurants prepare orders that gig workers deliver via platforms. Despite the platform's emphasis on customer satisfaction and collaboration with restaurants, delivery workers, who perform low-skilled labour with minimal job security, remain the most vulnerable. They face social marginalization, economic instability, and geographic limitations that exacerbate their precarious condition (Puram & Gurumurthy, 2023) Despite these challenges, platform workers are beginning to</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		organize and voice their grievances, with support from media outlets and labour unions. Some workers have even likened their situation to historical instances of slavery, coining terms such as 'slaves to the platforms' and discussing 'modern slavery in the platform economy.' This study seeks to explore the validity of these comparisons by contextualizing current working conditions within the broader historical framework of slavery, with a focus on India
Suchismita Chatterjee	The Hidden Cookie Monster: Understanding Privacy Violation, Surveillance And Chilling Effects In Digital Age	In the digital age, the ubiquitous presence of website cookies has transformed the landscape of online interaction. These small data files, often unnoticed by users, play a significant role in shaping the digital experience. However, their pervasive nature raises critical questions regarding their impact on fundamental rights, particularly in the context of expression, choice, and privacy. This article

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>explores the implications of website cookies on these aspects, with a specific focus on their alignment with Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees protection to life and liberty. By examining their influence on individual online behaviours, including surveillance and chilling effects, through surveys and analysis, the article highlights the shortcomings of current Indian legislation, notably the Information Technology Act, 2000 (IT Act), and the Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, in addressing cookie-related challenges and protecting user privacy. Using both quantitative and qualitative method to discuss impacts of personal data violation, the article advocates for the urgent implementation of a dedicated cookie law in India to effectively regulate cookie usage and uphold user privacy in the digital realm.</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
Medhavi Gupta	AI Assistants and Sex Robots: Impact on Agency and Care Work	<p>Debates on digitalisation and technology recognise many issues of gender and misogyny such as the gender digital divide, hiring bias, physiognomy and facial recognition tools reinforcing stereotypes and so on. The nature of progress brought about by technological advancement can thus be questioned; as carrying out tedious and organisational tasks and making human life easier on one hand. While, simultaneously burgeoning existing socio-economic differences of gender, race, caste and ethnicity. This is partly due to the gatekeeping and limited availability of such tools to only some sections and in part because of the fact that algorithms reflect the biases of the data they are fed. Therefore, the current digital paradigm not only actively seeks out patterns of existing biases in society but also reinforces them. Interestingly, AI assistants such as Siri and Alexa have historically been coded as female. Even ELIZA, the first chatbot</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>and an early AI therapist was coded female. Furthermore, studies show that male and female-sounding voice assistants respond differently to emergency situations, verbal abuse and giving advice in line with gendered social expectations and stereotypes. This raises concerns as care work has historically been associated with women and been the basis of their oppression in the capitalism-patriarchy nexus. This brings forth the concept of gender performativity and begs questions of why are AI assistants being trained to perform gender roles, who does it benefit and what will be its consequences?</p> <p>In recent years, the rise of AI sex chatbots, (robots for sex which are predominantly female) and AI-generated pornographic content are leading to increased commodification of sex, higher rates of porn, sex and sexbot addiction and therefore further reproducing notions of</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>non-consensual sexual activity. Women are one of the worst affected demographic subgroups by these changes, as for them it assumes the role of objectification and loss of autonomy and agency. In this paper, we aim to conduct an impact-oriented analysis of AI application on cisgender females through the process of othering, commodification and objectification. We will demonstrate the negative impacts of AI technologies on women through a two-pronged approach by studying the condition of women in the domains of sex and care work.</p>
Shahab Naqvi	Digital acquaintance – an urgent need for its outreach, advocacy and appropriation among diverse communities; perils of using internet and	<p>“India is predominantly a rural country with two-third population and 70% workforce residing in rural areas. Rural economy constitutes nearly 50% of the National Income. Thus, the rural population’s sustained growth and development is critical to the overall growth and inclusive development. Those living in rural areas</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
	dangers it poses to human sustenance	<p>deserve better living standards for sanitation, housing, piped drinking water, and electricity. Better education, health facilities, skills, jobs, and consumption are considered equally crucial by an archetypal Indian rural household. The migration from rural to urban is one of the side effects if the development is not equitably addressed. The digital-first emphasis brought to the forefront by the Digital India Programme has highlighted the opportunity to catalyse and energise rural development initiatives. There are several ICT systems which were rolled out to support the Government Schemes and programmes catering to the rural areas. ICT infrastructure was strengthened through rollout of digital connectivity and setting up of Telecentres in villages through which ICT applications would provide services. We are writing this article with a point of view that thoughtful architecture</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		of digital infrastructure and its purposeful usage could resolve much of human distress in rural India.
Mahera Imam	Gender Dynamics and the Misuse of Personal Data: Understanding Vulnerabilities in the Digital Age	In the contemporary digital landscape, where data serves as a critical asset, the misuse of personal information represents a profound threat to privacy and security. This threat is not uniformly distributed but is deeply influenced by gender dynamics, resulting in varied levels of vulnerability and impact. This paper investigates the nuanced relationship between gender dynamics and the misuse of personal data, with a specific focus on social media platforms. Drawing on the work of Ruha Benjamin (2019), who explores how technological systems perpetuate racial and gender biases, and Safiya Umoja Noble (2018), who examines algorithmic discrimination and its disproportionate effects on marginalized groups, this paper sheds light on the unique challenges women faces due to the mishandling of their

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>personal information. It scrutinizes the implications of data misuse, including the exacerbation of existing gender disparities and the impediments to women's digital inclusion. The paper also addresses the importance of intersectionality, as articulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), in understanding the multifaceted nature of digital inequalities. By highlighting the intersection of gender with other axes of identity, the study proposes actionable policy recommendations aimed at creating inclusive and empowering digital environments. These recommendations are designed to address the specific needs and challenges faced by women, thereby fostering a more equitable and secure digital realm.</p>
Kaustubha Kalidindi	The development and release of AI and LLM models	<p>The development and release of AI, and LLM models has opened up several discussions on the process fulfilling generally regarded ethical principles. A core principle</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		that open models fulfil is transparency, as it allows stakeholders to ‘peek under the hood’, scrutinise, critique, and also contribute to the robustness of the model. Arguments have been made both in favour of and against openness/ open sourcing AI/LLM models. A question arises as to how much open sourcing an LLM model would imply that it has been ethically developed. This essay explores the current literature surrounding the development of open source/open AI models, and analyses frameworks in which the ethicality of AI development can be determined.
Shradhanjali Sarma	Analysing Frontex and EUROSUR: Creation of a Digital Fortress at the EU Borders	This paper focuses on a key challenge facing current data protection and privacy legislation: their inadequacy in regulating data in the era of AI. The opaque nature of AI poses challenges in comprehending how data collected by the data controller influences the output. AI models are recognized for their

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>capacity to derive new data from the input data points. For instance, in the context of a resume screening AI model, basic data points like name, address, and date of birth are provided. However, the AI model goes beyond these known data points to generate entirely new sets of information for resume assessment. Although individuals may have consented to the use of their personal data for this purpose, they did not explicitly agree to the creation of new information through data generation. The inherent complexity of AI models makes it difficult to gauge the impact of such data generation on individuals' privacy. This is one of the concerning issues in generative AI models, where new data is generated from data fed into the systems.</p>
Aleena T Sabu	Migration Governance through AI in the EU: Racial discrimination and Privacy Violations	

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
Yamini Sharma Prateek Pawar Simran Moraes	Ethical AI in India: Comparing National Strategy with the UNESCO standards	<p>The Economic Survey of India states, “For better and worse, technology is emerging as the biggest strategic differentiator determining the economic prosperity of nations. Its productivity-enhancing potential is beyond doubt, but the social impact of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) is barely understood.”</p> <p>India’s AI Mission is a pivotal initiative to foster a robust AI ecosystem to drive innovation and address societal challenges. As AI’s influence expands across sectors like healthcare, finance, manufacturing, education, and traditions, ensuring its ethical development and deployment is imperative. While the mission aligns with the global push for AI advancement, it’s crucial to evaluate its adherence to international ethical guidelines. While Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming industries globally, including healthcare, finance, retail, manufacturing,</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>and agriculture in India, the launch of the National AI Strategy and the National AI Portal, India's AI Mission, aims to bolster AI infrastructure, improve data quality, and encourage the growth of domestic AI technologies. However, the rapid adoption of AI poses significant ethical challenges, necessitating alignment with global standards. In 2021, UNESCO released "Recommendations on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence," which serve as a guiding framework for nations seeking to develop AI responsibly and ethically. This literature review explores India's AI Mission through the lens of these recommendations, emphasising the importance of addressing the moral concerns surrounding AI implementation. By examining its objectives, strategies, and potential outcomes, we aim to identify areas where ethical considerations may need strengthening. This analysis will contribute to a broader</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		discussion on responsible AI development in a diverse and rapidly evolving technological landscape.
Isha Suri & Pallavi Bedi	Safeguarding Privacy and Autonomy in an Increasingly Datafied World	
Rajeshwari Balasubramanian & Dharish David	AI Regulations in India	<p>The rapid proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) systems in India presents significant challenges, particularly concerning algorithmic bias and discrimination. This study explores how societal biases related to gender, religion, caste, and socioeconomic background are replicated and amplified by AI algorithms in critical sectors such as hiring, recruitment, and financial services.</p> <p>The reliance on AI-powered tools used in hiring and recruitment raises significant concerns about biases against specific demographic groups, including gender, religion, caste and socioeconomic</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>background. A study by Narayan (2023) highlights that AI-based hiring systems in India tend to favour candidates from dominant castes and socioeconomic backgrounds, leading to the exclusion of marginalised groups or underrepresented demographics. Similarly, algorithmic lending practices in financial services, designed to streamline credit scoring, risk perpetuating biases in loan approvals and interest rates, exacerbating financial inequalities. Mathiyazhagan (2023) argues that linking databases to India's national ID system, combined with the growing use of AI for loan approvals, slams doors firmly shut on marginalised communities. These sectors exemplify the urgent need to address algorithmic bias, as similar issues may also arise in criminal justice and healthcare, further entrenching systemic discrimination. Drawing from two</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>theoretical frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – John Dewey's understanding of experience and the feminist understanding of structural injustice, we explain how AI and algorithmic bias can impact people from marginalized communities and what are the potential issues emerging in the future. To arrive at our findings and conclusion we conduct an exploratory study with experts on the subject and also diverse fields giving us different perspectives that we have captured through a systematic analysis of the data. Our findings suggest that there are potentially challenging issues that the use of Algorithms poses in the Indian context that become exemplified because of pre-existing historical biases and structural injustices prevalent in the society. The potential solutions that emerge from the findings indicate towards bridging the digital divide through investments in digital literacy and access to technology, promoting data equity

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		through initiatives that ensure representation of marginalized communities in AI data sets, and fostering collaboration and open dialogue among policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, and civil society to co-create a responsible AI ecosystem in India. By prioritizing equity and ethical considerations in its approach to AI, India can harness its transformative potential to foster human flourishing and build a more just and equitable society for all its citizens.
Krupa Thakkar Md Tasnimul Hassan	Beyond the Bias: Analysing AI Systems and its Inherent Problem of Automation Bias with reference to Legal and Policy Implications	The development of AI is the biggest development in human history. AI offers new powers and increased efficiency. Though ethnic, religious, and other social minorities are disproportionately affected by these technologies' pervasive prejudices. This paper investigates the nuances of bias in AI systems and considers how they may affect Indian legal and public policy frameworks. In the process, the paper examines

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		various use scenarios that either embody or have a propensity to reinforce prejudice and discrimination. This paper presents a methodology for developing responsible AI while advocating for a more egalitarian digital future through the integration of real-world use cases and strong and responsible AI principles.
Gusztáv Nemes Christopher High	The Rise of the Sustainable Knowledge Economy: Alternative Food Systems, AI, and the Ecological Paradigm Shift	The pressing environmental challenges posed by industrial agriculture necessitate a paradigm shift toward more sustainable practices. Alternative food systems—such as agro-ecological farming, community-supported agriculture, and permaculture—offer viable solutions but are hindered by a lack of comprehensive knowledge infrastructure. This paper explores the emergence of the Sustainable Knowledge Economy (SKE) within Hungary’s alternative food sector, emphasizing the centrality of knowledge characterized by flexibility, reflexivity, and practice-based learning. Through

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>an in-depth case study and a series of focus group workshops with key knowledge holders, we investigate how sustainability knowledge is produced, commodified, and disseminated, highlighting the shift from grassroots, voluntary sharing to more institutionalized and market-driven models. Our preliminary explorations raise critical questions about the opportunities and challenges inherent in this transition, particularly concerning the preservation of core ecological and social values amidst commodification. In this context, we consider the potential complementary role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in supporting knowledge exchange and validation within the SKE. While AI technologies offer possibilities for enhancing knowledge dissemination and accessibility, they also present risks related to control, commodification, and the reinforcement</p>

Name	Topic of the paper	Abstract
		<p>of existing inequalities. We discuss these considerations to frame future research directions. This paper aims to illuminate the key issues and questions that arise from the emerging SKE in alternative food systems. By outlining our initial findings and proposing a research agenda, we seek to contribute to the discourse on how the SKE can effectively catalyze the ecological paradigm shift without compromising its foundational sustainability principles.</p>





Exhibitions

Algorithmic Command and Control



Disconnected by Design: Unraveling the Impact of Digitized Attendance on NREGA Workers

Sharada Kerkar



Disconnected by
Design: Unraveling the
Impact of Digitized
Attendance on NREGA
Workers



CIRC
Center for Innovation and Research in Circuits
Building a Better Future





Concluding Plenary







Osama Manzar, Sidharth Malempati, Lauren Grubbs, Sonia Jorge, Abdul Shaban, K Mohan Raidu, Siddhesh Gautam, Niti Biyani (from left to right)

Algorithmic Futures: Ensuring Rights, Access & Justice

The concluding panel “Algorithmic Futures: Ensuring Rights, Access & Justice for Communities” at Digital Citizen Summit 2024 explored critical insights on justice, equity, and inclusion in our digital future. The panelists emphasised the importance of tailored approaches to address the diverse realities of communities, challenging traditional notions of impartiality and fairness. The discussions highlighted the necessity of incorporating social justice into digital initiatives and amplifying voices from marginalized groups. The panelists reflected on the role of imagery and representation in respecting individual dignity while fostering inclusivity. Bridging gaps in digital access and enabling underrepresented groups to benefit from technology were central themes. The session also underscored the importance of collaborative efforts among communities, academics, and policymakers to create a just and accessible digital ecosystem. With reflections on global community networks and grassroots digital public infrastructure projects, the event demonstrated how technology can empower disconnected regions.

[Watch Video Here](#)



Speaker List

1. Shri Jayesh Ranjan, Special Chief Secretary, Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications (ITE&C) and Department of Industries & Commerce, Government of Telangana
2. Sujit Jagirdar, CEO, T-HUB
3. Osama Manzar, Founder-Director, Digital Empowerment Foundation
4. Rajnesh Singh, CEO, APNIC Foundation
5. Sonia Jorge, Executive Director, Global Digital Inclusion Partnership
6. Sowmya Kidambi, Director and CEO, Barefoot College, Tilonia
7. Rakshita Swamy, Founder and Director, Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR)
8. Shaik Salauddin, Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU)
9. Akansha Ahluwalia, Digital Empowerment Foundation
10. Asif Ali Zaidi, Software Freedom Law Center (Virtual)
11. Dr. Janaki Srinivasan, University of Oxford (Virtual)
12. Nilay Shah, Software Freedom Law Center
13. Rakesh Dubuddu, Factly

14. Kritika Goel, LogicallyFacts (Virtual)
15. Supriya Sharma, Scroll (Virtual)
16. Shruti Narayan, Access Now
17. Mrinalini Ravindranath, Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project
18. Anvesh Baki, Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project
19. Akshay Nambi, Microsoft Research
20. Swetha Kolluri, World Bank
21. Rajesh Jalan, Cropin
22. Shweta Singh, Corteva AgriSciences
23. Dr. Shaik N.Meera, Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute
24. Varnika Yertha, Pratham Books StoryWeaver
25. Lauren Grubbs, USAID
26. Hayley Pottle, USAID
27. Rahul Paith, Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Technology Hub (MATH)
28. Vaishali Soni, Point of View
29. Prathana Mitra, Point of View
30. Professor Amir Ullah Khan, Member of TSPSU
31. Anshul Tewari, Youth Ki Awaaz
32. Priyanka Dutt, Giving Tuesday India Hub
33. Nivedita Krishna, Pacta
34. Dr Arun Teja Polcumpally, Pacta
35. Radhika Yelkur, Naandi Foundation
36. Dr. Sharique Hassan Manazir, Kautilya School of Public Policy

37. Romita Ghosh, iHeal HealthTech
38. Dr. Gopika Gopan K, Wadhwani AI
39. Dr. Aakashsha Natani, International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad
40. Professor Rajesh Chakrabati, Bennett University
41. Akhmat Safrudin, LocNet
42. Catherine Tiongson, LocNet
43. Gomer Padong, Institute for Social Entrepreneurship in Asia (ISEA)
44. Amitabh Kumar, Social Media Matters
45. Mili Dangwal, Digital Empowerment Foundation
46. Sumaiya Khan, St Xavier's College, Goa
47. Syed Mohammad Haroon, Software Freedom Law Center
48. Swinery, Content Creator (Virtual)
49. Dr. Arpita Kanjilal, Digital Empowerment Foundation
50. Khush Vachhrajani, Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR)
51. Mukesh Goswami, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)
52. Paras Banjara, Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR) & Rajasthan SR Abhiyan
53. Kaustubha Kalindi, Tattle Civic Technologies
54. Radhika Sarin, GSMA
55. Professor Anirban Dasgupta, International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad
56. Rama Lanka Devi, Government of Telangana
57. Prabodh Mahajan, SignAssist
58. Atharva Joshi, Civis

59. Aindriya Barua, ShhorAI (Virtual)
60. Chanukya Patnaik, AI Planet
61. Professor Abdul Shaban, TISS Mumbai
62. Professor Sachidanand Sinha, IMPRI
63. Dr. Prashant Narnaware, Government of Maharashtra
64. Dr. Neha Gupta, TISS Mumbai
65. Dr Christian Handke, Erasmus University (Virtual)
66. Dr. Markha Valenta, Utrecht University (Virtual)
67. Dr. Zinat Aboli, University of Paris (Virtual)
68. Juan Angel Demerutis Arenas, University of Guadalajara (Virtual)
69. Amrita Sengupta, The Centre for Internet and Society (CIS)
70. Ananya Bhattacharya, Rest of World
71. Professor Radhika Krishnan, International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad
72. Deepak Krishnan, World Resources Institute India
73. Siddhartha Malempati, Commons Collective
74. Rahma Utami, Suarise
75. Anushka Jain, Digital Futures Lab
76. Shreeja Sen, Digital Futures Lab
77. Nina Bual, Cyberlite
78. Michelle Yao, Cyberlite
79. Vikas Moola, Digital Empowerment Foundation
80. Siddesh Gautam, Independent Artist
81. Professor Atul Negi, School of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad

- 82. Professor Salman Moiz, School of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad
- 83. Dr. Madhavi Ravikumar, Department of Communication, University of Hyderabad
- 84. Jenny Sulfath, Digital Empowerment Foundation
- 85. Saleema Razvi, Copenhagen Consensus
- 86. Nitesh Bharadwaj, Aadiwasi Janjaguti
- 87. Upasana Hembram, ISOC Foundation
- 88. Pankaj Pachauri, GoNews
- 89. K. Mohan Raidu, ISOC Hyderabad Chapter



SPEAKERS BIO

Shri Jayesh Ranjan



Mr. Jayesh Ranjan is a member of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) of the 1992 batch and working in the state of Telangana. He holds a Masters Degree in Psychology from Delhi University, a degree in Business Management from the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, and a Masters in Public Management from Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. He has also done short courses in the University of Birmingham (on Environmental Policy Analysis), JICA Training Institute, Tokyo (on lake remediation), London School of Economics (on Globalization and Leadership), Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (in Public Policy), and Swedish Institute, Stockholm (on Sustainability and CSR). He is the All-India topper of his IAS batch of 1992.

He was awarded the World Bank's Social Capital Visiting Scholarship in 2002 and the British Government's Gurukul

Chevening Scholarship in 2005. He has done international consultancy assignments for the World Bank, UN-ESCAP, Sedatu project of Mexico, and for international NGOs working for Youth Issues like YES, Inc of the USA and NMC from Italy. He is a part of the National Pool of Trainers in Leadership constituted by the Government of India and is involved in training and mentoring newly recruited Civil Servants. Among his other distinctions, he was awarded the Royal Order of the Polar Star by His Majesty The King of Sweden in 2019 for promoting Swedish business interests in India including the opening of IKEA's first Indian store in Hyderabad. He has also been awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Bolton (UK) in 2022 for promoting bilateral trade and investments between the UK and Telangana.

Jayesh Ranjan is the Special Chief Secretary of the Industries & Commerce (I&C) and Information Technology (IT) Departments of the Telangana government. His assignment involves developing policy frameworks, attracting new investments, identifying opportunities for utilising IT in various government processes, and promoting the digital empowerment of the citizens. His last few assignments have been in the Industrial Promotion sector as Commissioner and MD of the Industries Department, Secretary in the Tourism Promotion Department, and Vice-Chairman of the Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA), all for 2-3 years each, and various rural assignments in different parts of the state for over 12 years, working in diverse sectors like Tribal Development, Natural Resources Management, Poverty Alleviation and other related Social Development Sectors.

Jayesh Ranjan supports many social, cultural and charitable causes and is on the Boards / Advisory committees of United Way (Hyderabad), Save A Child's Heart (SACH) Foundation, Young Lives India, Save the Children, Sparsh Hospice, APMAS, ML Jaisimha Sports Foundation, Hyderabad 10 K Foundation, Vijaya Foundation Trust, Ushalakshmi Breast Cancer Foundation, LSN Foundation, Tejas Foundation, Magic Bus Hyderabad, World Wildlife Fund (Hyderabad chapter), Hyderabad Literary Festival. Spic-Macay. Heal a Child Foundation, Moving Images, Society to Aid the Hearing Impaired (SAHI), and Institute of Public Enterprises (IPE).

Sujit Jagirdar



Sujit Jagirdar is the Chief Executive Officer of the world's largest and pioneering Startup Innovation ecosystem – T-Hub, located in Hyderabad. His role involves driving 'open innovation-led business transformation' with corporates & government entities, driving International programs with Global firms & building partnerships with Innovation hubs to deliver impact. Key focus areas include enabling market access for startups, POCs, and Pilots and collaborating with corporates for co-innovation & co-creation.

He is a frequent speaker at CII, TiE as well as international Tech Fests on topics such as Digital Transformation, Mobility, Energy Transition, Startups & Innovation. He has delivered sessions at IIM Calcutta, IIM Lucknow, BITS Pilani etc. He is on the Advisory Council of CII's Green Entrepreneurship Council and on the Advisory Committee of the T-Hub Board.

With more than 2 decades of experience, Sujit has worked with large global organisations like Wipro Technologies, Oracle India and Godrej & Boyce Mfg Co. Ltd. He is a Global Consulting & IT Delivery leader helping clients in their Innovation and Transformation journeys. His experience included managing CXOs / stakeholders' global IT Program delivery across sectors like Consumer Goods, Manufacturing, Travel, Transportation & Hospitality. He has extensive experience in scaling IT Consulting Practices like o9 SCM & Ecommerce, specialised practices like Cyber Security Consulting and Packaged Testing practices.

Osama Manzar



Osama Manzar is the Founder and Director of the Digital Empowerment Foundation and Senior Ashoka Fellow. Osama is a global leader on the mission of eradicating information poverty from India and the global south using digital tools. He is a social entrepreneur, author, columnist, impact speaker, angel investor, and mentor, and sits on several government and policy committees in India and on international organisations working in the areas of the Internet, access, and digital inclusion. With over 30 years of experience, Osama has worked in the areas of journalism, new media, and software enterprise and ended up creating the Digital Empowerment Foundation that works in India and several other countries to digitally empower the masses with a footprint of 1500-plus locations and interventions in more than 10 countries including the countries in South Asia.

He is a British Chevening Scholar and is also an International Visitors Leadership Program Fellow of the US State Department. He has coauthored more than 5 books including Internet Economy of India. His recent book was released during the COVID-19 pandemic called “The New Normal: How to Survive the New World Order”. Osama has instituted 10 awards for recognising digital innovations for development in India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. He is a member of the advisory committee for Digital Services at the National E-Gov Division (NEGD) at the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology. Osama has served several Boards and Advisory Councils like the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI), World Summit Award (WSA), Down to Earth Magazine, Barefoot College Tilonia, Ibtada; Society for Labour & Development, Protsahan Sanstha; Multiversity Alliance, and ProtoVillage.

Rajnish Singh

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Rajnish Singh joined the APNIC Foundation in December 2023. He is a technology industry thought leader and former serial entrepreneur with extensive experience in the Asia-Pacific and beyond. He has played founding and leading roles in several technology and private equity investment firms with significant experience in business management and strategy development, spanning diverse industries such as telecommunications, power infrastructure, agriculture, and real estate. He has an intimate understanding of the nuances of the Asia-Pacific with lived experiences in the region. He has worked extensively with governments, academia, civil society, and the private sector and has served on several Advisory Boards. He has been part of Expert Working Groups for regional and international organisations on infrastructure, policy, regulatory reform, and development issues.

His Internet community leadership roles include Chair of the Asia-Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF), Founding Chair of ICANN's Asia Pacific Regional At-Large Organisation (APRALO), and he was the Regional Vice President for Asia-Pacific at the Internet Society (ISOC) and established its Singapore-based subsidiary.

At the APNIC Foundation, he builds partnerships and advocates for the technologies, policies and best practices that contribute to a global, open, stable and secure Internet that is affordable and accessible to the entire Asia Pacific community.



Sonia Jorge

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Sonia Jorge is the Founder and Executive Director of the Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP). Sonia is an experienced leader and international digital policy expert. She has successfully led global coalitions, bringing together the private sector, governments, and civil society actors from across the globe to deliver the policies needed to reduce the cost to connect and make universal meaningful connectivity a reality for everyone in global majority countries. As a policy advisor and gender equality advocate with experience in over 45 countries, she has led numerous digital policy and development projects in several regions and with international organisations, such as the World Bank, UNDP, UN Women, ITU, and for private sector companies and associations.

Sonia was recognised by apolitical as one of the World's 100 Most Influential People in Digital Government in 2019. She serves or has served as a member and expert in a number of Committees, including CGAP's Data Project, DFID's Digital Access Panel for Africa, the ITU-UN Women EQUALS Partnership, The World Economic Forum's Future of the Internet Initiative, the Broadband Commission Working Group on the Gender Digital Divide, the Advisory Committee on International Communications and Information Policy (ACICIP) Subcommittee of the U.S. State Department on ICT4D, and the EU-AU Digital Economy Task Force. She is an Independent Board Director with KaiOS Technologies,

an Advisory Board member of UNESCO's Cetic.br Regional Center and a frequent speaker at international, regional and national forums.

Sonia was the co-founder and Executive Director of the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) until September 2022. She has a Masters in Public Policy from Tufts University and degrees in Economics and Business Finance from the University of Massachusetts.



Sowmya Kidambi

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Sowmya Kidambi joined as Director and CEO of the Barefoot College, Tilonia in June 2023 after 25 years of working in the area of social accountability, transparency, monitoring and evaluation and governance with a specific emphasis on social audits. She holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay with a

specialisation in Urban and Rural Community Development and a Diploma in Human Rights from the ISHR, Columbia University, New York. Sowmya began working with a grassroots movement, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, Rajasthan in 1998 and was part of the movement for the Right to Information and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. After 7 years of working with MKSS, she joined the Government of Andhra Pradesh to set up the first independent social audit society. She worked with the GoAP and Telangana for 18 years and for 13 years and headed the Social Audit Society. She has also worked internationally as a Technical Assistance Provider in Social Audits.



Rakshita Swamy

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Rakshita Swamy is the Founder and Director of SAFAR. She has worked towards advocating and institutionalising transparency, accountability and citizen participation in governance through her collaborations with Central and State Governments and Civil Society Organizations. Her work focuses on conceptualising, demonstrating and institutionalising mechanisms that enable disclosure of

information, time-bound grievance redress and social audits in the delivery of schemes and functioning of public institutions. She worked with the Ministry of Rural Development with a mandate to support State Governments in implementing social audits under the MGNREGA, and drawing institutional synergies on social audits with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. She is associated with the Right to Information and Right to Work campaigns. She has a Masters in Social Policy and Development from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a Bachelors in Economics from Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi.



Pankaj Pachauri

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Pankaj Pachauri is a senior print and broadcast journalist with more than three decades of editorial and management experience in print and electronic media across three continents. He has worked in Delhi, London, Boston and Hong Kong with leading news organisations such as NDTV, BBC World Service (UK), Public Radio International (US), India Today magazine, The Sunday Observer and The Patriot newspapers.

In 2017 he launched India's first app based TV News Channel, GoNews, and turned into an entrepreneur.

His espousal of free, secular and progressive journalism as a reporter, TV anchor and editor based in South-East Asia, Europe, the United States and India has won him several national and international journalism awards.

For over two years, he worked as the Communications Adviser to the Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh, assisting his office in managing national and international media. During his tenure with the Prime Minister's Office, he has designed and executed media strategy across various platforms for international events like the G20 Summits, NAM, ASEAN Summit, BRICS Summits and United Nations General Assembly.



Shaik Salauddin



Shaik Salauddin has worked with app-based ride-hailing/sharing companies since 2012 and has been a driver organiser in Hyderabad since 2014. In his role as an organiser, Shaik Salauddin has worn several hats. In 2014, he founded the Telangana Four-Wheeler Drivers' Association to represent the interests of outsourced, contracted, and other private drivers. In 2016, he established the Telangana State Taxi and Drivers' Joint Action Committee, which brought 20 drivers' associations and unions in the State under one organisational umbrella. In 2019, he was elected the newly-formed National General Secretary of the 'Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers (IFAT), a registered trade union, a coalition of 20 workers' associations and unions from 15 cities across India, collectively having around 35,000 members. IFAT is not associated or affiliated with any political party or National Labour Centre. In this role, Shaik Salauddin has helped to advise and coordinate efforts across states, organising collective action of drivers and delivery workers, and meeting with policymakers, labour organisers and activists, and legal and academic experts.

In 2022, he started a new organisation called Telangana Gig and Platform Workers' Union (TGPWU), through which he hopes to broaden his sights beyond ride-hailing/sharing and delivery workers and reach out to all gig and platform workers in Telangana state. The organisation is registered under the 1926 Trade Union Act, it is a non-political party

union. TGPWU has negotiated with the ride-hailing/sharing and delivery aggregators and ensured that the demands of the gig and platform workers are heard and their issues are resolved in the state. TGPWU aspires to bring all gig and platform workers working with Ola, Uber, Swiggy, Zomato, Blinkit, Flipkart, BigBasket, Amazon, Dunzo, Shadowfax, Urban Company etc. On 1st May 2023, Shaik Salauddin was awarded recognition for his work with gig and platform workers in Telangana, the Shram Shakti Award by Ch. Malla Reddy, Minister for Labour & Employment, Factories, Skill Development Govt. of Telangana. Shaik, as a union leader, has been actively attempting to engage in forming an advocacy group for the rights of gig and platform workers.





Akanksha Ahluwalia

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Akanksha Ahluwalia, Manager, Communications and Media Department at Digital Empowerment Foundation, holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in English Literature from Delhi University. Her expertise spans gender studies, analysing misinformation and hate speech online, and understanding new media platforms through an intersectional lens, with a focus on development sector communication. Akanksha expertise lies in developing strategic communication approaches that leverage digital ingenuity while addressing paradoxes and nuances within new media platforms. She also leads efforts in crafting narratives and conducting workshops that empower marginalised voices and advance social causes within the digital sphere.



Asif Ali Zaidi

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Asif Ali Zaidi is a Delhi-based lawyer who has been associated with SFLC.in as a Policy Counsel. Asif studied law at Aligarh Muslim University and worked as Judicial Clerk in Telangana High Court for over three years. Since November 2022, has been involved in issues related to the intersectionality of Human And Digital Rights. He has co-authored papers on Digital Exclusion in PDS In India, Surveillance in MGNREGA Scheme, participated in a surveillance conference in Slovenia, held a discussion on Data Protection Law at ISB and spoke to law students on digital rights.



Nilay Shah

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Nilay Shah is a Policy Counsel at the Software Freedom Law Center India. He studied law at Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai and has worked at the intersection of law, policy, and technology. He has worked with TMT teams at law firms prior to joining SFLC.in. His interests lie in technology law, international trade law, and policy research.

GenAI and Disinformation: Regulate Platforms, Not People by Access Now

Dr. Janaki Srinivasan

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Dr. Janaki Srinivasan prior to joining the University of Oxford as Associate Professor in Digital South Asian Studies was faculty at the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Bangalore and convenor of its Centre for Information Technology and Public Policy. She has a PhD in Information Management and Systems from the University of California Berkeley and Masters degrees in Physics and Information Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and IIIT Bangalore.

Her research and writing have examined the politics of informational and digital exclusion in initiatives spanning varied digital technologies and parts of India. Her current interests include privacy and the algorithmic control of labour. For the past 5 years, as co-investigator on the Fairwork India team, she has been involved in researching and advocating for change in the precarious working conditions of digital platform-based gig workers in India.

Rakesh Dubbudu



Rakesh Dubbudu is the founder of Factly Media & Research, a prominent civic-tech, fact-checking, and public data initiative in India. With a career spanning over two decades, he has dedicated himself to championing transparency, information access, and combating mis/disinformation through innovative technology solutions. His work lies at the intersection of data access, information consumption, and technology, with a specific focus on AI-driven products that address the pressing challenges of the information age. In particular, he has championed the cause of the Right to Information legislation advocating for improved information access to the public.

Kritika Goel



Kritika Goel is the Head of Editorial Operations (India) at Logically Facts. She leads a team of over 20 multilingual fact-checkers and works towards mitigating the harms of

online mis and disinformation. Earlier, she was working as the deputy editor (fact-check) at The Quint. She led their fact-checking initiative, WebQoof, and worked on several projects promoting media and digital literacy among women, students, and young adults in India. She conceptualised and started an award-winning series, 'Verify Kiya Kya?', to make fact-checking simple and accessible. Her work as a fact-checker has won her recognition and several accolades.

Supriya Sharma

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Supriya Sharma is the Executive Editor of Scroll, India's first digital-only news organisation which was founded in 2014 and has since won nearly 50 awards.

In a career spanning more than two decades, Supriya has covered politics, conflict and development in some of India's most embattled regions. She has won every major journalism honour in the country, from the Ramnath Goenka Awards, the Red Ink Awards, the Chameli Devi Award for Outstanding Woman Journalist, among others. Her portfolio of award-winning work includes reporting on the Maoist insurgency in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh, dispatches from a crisscrossing train journey during national elections, and more recently, an investigative report on the Narendra Modi government's use of a federal investigative agency to target the political opposition.

In her role as an editor at one of India's small and independent newsrooms, Supriya has led sustained coverage of rising majoritarian politics and crony capitalism, but also a diverse range of stories on environment, climate, education, health and gender. Supriya is the co-author of *Love Jihad and Other Fictions, Simple Facts to Counter Viral Falsehoods* (Aleph Book Company, 2024), a book that debunks viral conspiracy theories that have been amplified by India's ruling party. She lives in Delhi.

Shruti Narayan

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Shruti Narayan is Asia Pacific Policy Counsel at Access Now, a non-profit organisation which works to extend and defend the digital rights of people across the world. She works on issues of freedom of expression, internet shutdowns, surveillance and spyware, and data protection across South Asia, including a report on YouTube's inability to detect election misinformation. Shruti is a lawyer, with litigation experience in constitutional and criminal law.



Mrinalini Ravindranath



Mrinalini Ravindranath is a lawyer/researcher and Research Head at the Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project. She is also an Inlaks Fellow for Social Engagement for 2022-2024. She has worked with rights-based organisations on issues of caste, gender and criminalisation of rights for over 5 years. She graduated with her BA/LLB from the National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata. Her writings have been published in the Hindu, Indian Express and Scroll. in and she has been involved in civil society submissions to various national statutory bodies and UN Committees.

Anvesh Baki

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Anvesh Baki is a lawyer and independent researcher currently working with the Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project as a researcher. He has previously worked as a research associate in the office of the Addl. Advocate General of Telangana for a year from 2021-2022. His research interests include constitutional and Human rights, especially focusing on historically marginalised communities and identities, Indigenous sovereignties and federalism. He holds an LLM degree in law with a specialisation in Human Rights Conflict and Justice from SOAS in 2023, University of London, United Kingdom and a B.A. LLB (Hons.) degree from NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad, India in 2021.

Akshay Nambi

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Akshay Nambi is a Principal Researcher at Microsoft Research (MSR) India, with expertise at the intersection of systems engineering, AI, and machine learning. His work focuses on developing innovative solutions to tackle pressing global challenges, particularly in sectors such as education, agriculture, energy and transportation. Akshay's research is driven by real-world impact, and currently, his research centres on building reliable agentic AI systems designed for everyday AI applications, with the goal of making technology more accessible and transformative for all.

Swetha Kolluri



Swetha Kolluri is a data scientist and a rural development professional with 15 years of professional experience in India and USA. She is a Fulbright-Nehru scholar and an environmental management graduate from Yale University.

Her work encompasses diverse fields like climate change, agriculture and digital transformation. As Head of Experimentation at UNDP, she curated several digital public goods for climate resilience. At the World Bank, she advises the global digital agriculture portfolio on AI systems for climate-smart agriculture in Asia and Africa. She is a Visiting Fellow at CSEP where she builds AI innovations to inform climate policies in India.

Rajesh Jalan



Rajesh Jalan is the Chief Technology Officer and Head of Engineering at Cropin, the world's most advanced AI Platform for Food and Agriculture. He has over 25 years of experience

building and leading software products and services engineering teams that are globally scaled and trusted. An inventor and innovator at heart, over the course of his career, Rajesh has been awarded 10 patents in various areas including code analysis, code optimisation and operating systems. Rajesh graduated from the Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani, with a Bachelor of Technology degree in Computer Science and a Master of Science in Mathematics. Rajesh lives in Hyderabad and enjoys reading Behavioral Economics and Psychology in his spare time.

Shweta Singh

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Shweta Singh is a dynamic leader with 19 years of extensive experience across diverse sectors, including FMCG, F&B, telecom, Automobile and Agriscience, currently serving as the Community Partnership & Sustainability leader at Corteva Agriscience. With an MBA in International Business from IIFT, Delhi, and a B.E. in Computer Science, she brings a wealth of expertise in Sales, Marketing, Operations, Strategy and Sustainability to her role. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a remarkable ability to drive strategic initiatives and foster robust community partnerships. At Corteva, she has been instrumental in developing and implementing sustainable agricultural practices that enhance biodiversity, reduce environmental footprints, and promote resilient food systems. She is passionate about fostering innovation and sustainability in Agriculture.

Dr. Shaik N. Meera

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Dr Shaik N. Meera has notable professional accomplishments in the field of digital agriculture and extension systems, with substantial international experience. With over two decades of professional experience, Dr. Meera has led numerous impact acceleration efforts both in India and internationally. His expertise includes integrating cutting-edge digital technologies, modernising extension methodologies, and developing value chains that enhance agricultural sustainability.

Currently, he is serving as Director of ICAR ATARI Hyderabad, a Unit of the Federal Government of India, looking after Frontline Extension in four South Indian provinces (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry). Overseeing the operational management of 72 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), Dr. Meera's leadership has facilitated advancements in technology dissemination, farmer capacity building, frontline extension activities and large-scale impacts in agri-food systems.

During 2020-22, he worked as Senior Technical Expert (Digital Agriculture and Extension Systems) at the United Nation's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). He designed and deployed innovative extension strategies and programs across the rural value chains in 18 countries in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia, and Europe (NEN) region. As a consultant, he extended technical support to national and international organisations in modernising their extension programs with Mobile and cloud computing.

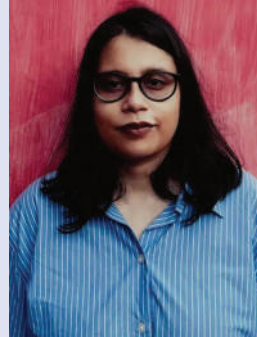
Vaishali Soni



Vaishali Soni is the Design Specialist at Point of View. With over a decade of experience in journalism and design, Vaishali Soni specialises in combining storytelling with visual design to create research-driven campaigns for social impact. She has collaborated with organisations such as Gaysi, UNICEF, Design Beku, Katha, and Times of India. Currently, she manages the visual universe at Point of View, Mumbai, crafting visuals for social change. In addition, she facilitates art-based creative workshops for digital advocacy, helping others use visuals as tools for social change.

Prarthana Mitra

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Prarthana Mitra (they/them) is a feminist practitioner based in New Delhi, India. At Point of View, as the Knowledge and Communications Manager, they are anchoring knowledge and communications for projects like The Digital Everyday (a residency on bodies, technologies and justice), and the EU's Gendered Disinformation project in India with the Association for Progressive Communications, also completing a Fellowship with the Digital Rights in Asia Pacific 2024. Over 6 years in the South Asian culture and development sector, Prarthana has also led communications, strategy, research and outreach for UNICEF India, The Union, John Snow International, Clinton Health Access Initiative, Participatory Research in Asia, and Doc Society's Good Pitch and Climate Story Lab programmes. Keen on exploring gender, identity, and social justice through culture, they also write extensively on new media and audio practices with bylines in Gaysi, Border Movement, Doing the Rondo and Gulmohur Quarterly among others.



Amir Ullah Khan



Amir Ullah Khan is an Economist and a Development Policy Professor at the MCR Human Resource Development Institute of the Government of Telangana. He was Research Director at CDPP and Visiting Professor at the Indian School of Public Policy in Delhi, Indian School of Business, Tata Institute of Social Science, Kautilya School of Public Policy and NALSAR in Hyderabad and at the Manipal Institute of Technology. A former civil servant of the 1993 batch of officers, Amir was a member of the G Sudhir Commission of Inquiry on Socio-economic issues of the Government of Telangana and a member of the Kundu Committee of the Government of India. He headed Strategy and Policy Research as Deputy Director at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He also has served as Director of the India Development Foundation, a Policy Institute in New Delhi.

Anshul Tewari

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Anshul Tewari is a social entrepreneur and the Founder of Youth Ki Awaaz, India's largest civic engagement platform that uses polling, surveys and storytelling to transform youth voices into actionable insights for social transformation. Youth Ki Awaaz engages over 200,000 young people to share stories and take surveys every month, and has an audience of over 20 million people a month. He has worked across media, technology and citizen generated data to build and scale community driven models of social change. Anshul is an Ashoka Fellow for social entrepreneurship and was named a Young Innovator by the United Nations ITU. He was also named a Forbes 30 Under 30 media influencer in 2018. He is also a founding trustee of the Misinformation Combat Alliance, a cross industry collaborative effort set up with the objective of combatting and limiting the spread of misinformation through targeted interventions and activities. Anshul also serves as a Board Trustee for the Internet Freedom Foundation that defends online freedom, privacy and innovation in India. He previously also served on the UN Women Civil Society Advisory Board for South and South East Asia.



Priyanka Dutt

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Priyanka Dutt is the Chief Advisor at the Giving Tuesday India Hub. A seasoned social impact leader, with over two decades of experience in the private and social sectors in India, using the power of media and communication to deliver social impact. A proven track record in leadership, organisational growth and business management, strategic and analytical thinking, creativity, communication, talent management, and program design and delivery.

Nivedita Krishna

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Nivedita Krishna, Founder and Director of Pacta is a law and public policy consultant with 15 years of experience in the corporate and social sector. In the last decade, she has focused on law and policy initiatives in inclusion, data & technology, and philanthropy. She has worked on data privacy issues across geographies in public health, gender, and employment. Nivedita is also a legal consultant for the Azim Premji Foundation.

Dr. Arun Teja Polcumpally

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Dr Arun Teja Polcumpally is a Technology Policy Manager at Pacta, responsible for designing and executing research programs at the intersection of digital technologies and society. His PhD focused on the geopolitical impact of AI surveillance through realist and neo-Gramscian lenses. He is a published author and was earlier associated with Wadhvani Foundation, and CDPP.

Radhika Yelkur

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Radhika Yelkur comes to Naandi Foundation with 22 years of work experience in various leadership roles, many of them entrepreneurial. An alumnus of the famous Rishi Valley School and National Institute of Fashion Technology, Radhika who has a double Masters degree in English and Technical Translation is fluent in French apart from most of the South Indian languages. In recent years, Radhika has taken up running as a new passion.

Radhika is the newest member on Naandi's leadership team and heads operations for the Nanhi Kali programme for the south of India.

Dr. Sharique Hassan Manazir



Dr. Sharique Hassan Manazir is a distinguished scholar specialising in Policy Science, Science, Technology & Society (STS), and Digital Democracy. He is well known for his research on political willingness in policymaking, particularly in the context of digital democracy. Dr. Manazir earned his PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, where his research focused on citizen e-participation's impact on public policy. As an Assistant Professor at the Kautilya School of Public Policy, India, he teaches Technology, Society & Governance, Foundation of Public Policy, and Design Thinking for Citizen-Centric Public Policy. Formerly, he led Government Capacity Building and the Parliamentary and Legislative Support Programme at the Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business.



Romita Ghosh

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Romita Ghosh is the Founder and CEO of iHeal HealthTech. She is a visionary leader revolutionising healthcare through AI and digital innovations. With over 17 years of experience, she has developed groundbreaking solutions like Maap AI, addressing malnutrition and bridging healthcare gaps across India. Romita's work has directly impacted over 500,000 lives, earning her prestigious accolades such as the Women Transforming India Award by Niti Aayog and being named among the Top 50 Women in Innovation by CII PwC. An influential voice in digital health, Romita has co-chaired the UNGA Digital Health Summit and is a sought-after speaker on AI's role in transforming healthcare. Her leadership extends to mentoring entrepreneurs and advocating for women in science.

Dr. Gopika Gopan K



Dr. Gopika Gopan K is focused on developing scalable, high-impact AI-driven solutions that address the challenges faced by underserved communities, such as those aimed at TB eradication. Recipient of the Prof. Ravi Ravindran Gold Medal for her doctoral work at IIIT Bangalore, she began her career in academia with a post-doctoral stint before transitioning to industry. In her current role, she applies her expertise in machine learning to create deployable, real-world solutions in the healthcare and agriculture sectors. A responsible AI enthusiast, she assesses and integrates ethical considerations such as gender inclusivity and fairness for every AI-driven solution.

Dr. Aakansha Natani



Dr Aakansha Natani is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Human Sciences Research Centre, IIIT Hyderabad, India, where she offers courses on 'Internet and

Democracy' and 'AI and Human Rights' for undergraduate engineering students. In 2023, she was a D C Pavate Visiting Fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge, UK. Recently, she was awarded the Jean Monnet Module Grant by the European Commission for her project on "Digital Democracy and Data Governance in the European Union"

Professor Rajesh Chakrabarti



Professor Rajesh Chakrabarti is the Dean of the School of Management at Bennett University. He is a renowned academic and thought leader in the fields of Finance, Management, and Public Policy. His educational journey began at Presidency College, Calcutta, where he earned his B.Sc. in Economics (1991). He then pursued his Post Graduate Diploma in Management from the prestigious Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (1993) before completing his Ph.D. in Management (Finance) from the University of California, Los Angeles (1999). Dr. Chakrabarti's academic career spans over two decades, during which he has held teaching positions at esteemed institutions worldwide. He has been a faculty member at the University of Alberta, Canada; Georgia Institute of Technology, USA; and the Indian School of Business (ISB). His expertise in Finance has been recognised globally, with visiting positions at institutions such as IIM Calcutta, Indian Statistical Institute Delhi, IIM Udaipur, ICN Nancy (France), and the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

Gomer Padong



Gomer Padong serves as Supervising Programs and Development Cooperation Specialist at the Institute for Social Entrepreneurship in Asia (ISEA). He also coordinates Policy and Regulations for the Local Networks initiative with the Association for Progressive Communications and Rhizomatica. His work focuses on bridging the digital divide through sustainable, community-led solutions while advocating for inclusive Internet governance policies across Asia. Gomer brings valuable insights on community networks, digital rights, and social entrepreneurship to regional discussions.

Akhmat Safrudin

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Akhmat Safrudin as the Asia Capacity Building Coordinator for LocNet, drives community-centered connectivity to bridge the digital divide. With 15+ years in ICT, including open source, IoT, and cybersecurity, he empowers rural communities through inclusive tech initiatives, fostering sustainable access solutions for marginalised populations across Southeast Asia.

Catherine Tiongson

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Catherine Tiongson works as a Supervising Programs and Development Cooperation Specialist at ISEA. She also coordinates the Gender Integration Strategy for Asia for the Local Network Initiative with the Association of Progressive Communications and Rhizomatica. Her work focuses on promoting gender and women's economic empowerment among social enterprises and community-centred connectivity initiatives in Asia. With her more than 20+ years of development work, Cathy brings valuable insights on community networks, feminist internet and social entrepreneurship to the table.



Vikas Moola

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Vikas Moola is a dedicated Researcher and anti-caste activist with a passion for fostering equality and empowering marginalised communities. His research delves into the historical evolution of Citizenship and Democracy through an anti-caste lens, while his activism, as National Convener of the All India Independent Scheduled Castes Association (AIISCA), focuses on creating grassroots and national-level leadership for Dalit communities. With a wealth of experience in socio-political movements, academic research, and strategic organisation, he aims to bridge academic inquiry and social action for meaningful change.



Amitabh Kumar

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Amitabh Kumar is at the forefront of global expansion as the Go-to-Market leader at Contrails.ai, a startup dedicated to AI-powered trust and safety solutions. At Contrails.ai, Amitabh is scaling his vision for enhancing online safety across international borders, leveraging cutting-edge AI to safeguard digital interactions.

Amitabh spearheaded the initial Go-to-Market strategies for acclaimed online safety programs like Social Surfing and TzeeSurfing. These initiatives have reached over 100,000 individuals in person across India, Nepal, and Bhutan, with workshops conducted in more than 150 cities globally. His advocacy efforts have facilitated significant partnerships with tech leaders, including engagements with Mark Zuckerberg's Meta, Jack Dorsey's Twitter and Reed Hastings Netflix, cementing his status as a leader in online safety and digital citizenship.

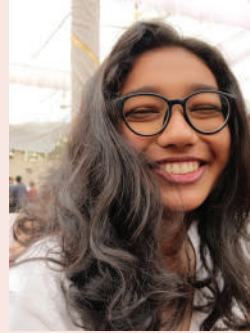
Mili Dangwal

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Mili Dangwal is a Digital Swaraj Fellow from the inaugural cohort, where she engaged deeply with the digital and social landscapes of rural Tamil Nadu, particularly supporting communities producing GI-tagged products through digital and artisan empowerment.

Now a part of the Communications and Media team at the Digital Empowerment Foundation, Mili plays a key role in expanding projects through social media advocacy, content curation, and event coordination. She envisions studying the impact of technology in societal contexts to enhance capacity-building and drive transformative change in underserved communities.



Sumaiya Khan

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Sumaiya Khan is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Arts degree as an English Major at St. Xavier's College, Goa. She has dabbled her hand at storytelling, poetry, theatre and public speaking and believes that words are spells waiting to be spoken or, in her case, written. In July 2022, her collection of 21 poems titled "PAPER BOAT" was published and selected after a nationwide writing challenge. She has since continued to publish her writings on online platforms, including Youth Ki Awaaz and Substack. In November 2023, she won first place in a National Level Story Writing Competition organised by Shiv Nadar University, Delhi, for her short story titled "A Little Time Out", inspired by her mother's many teachings of life.

Her other forms of creative expression include rap, monologues and script writing in Hindi, English and Konkani. She has an abiding interest in the traditions and folklore of her native Goa. Reading a good book, sipping a cup of tea and spending time with her numerous dogs are what make her the happiest.

Syed Mohammad Haroon



At SFLC.in, Syed Mohammad Haroon leads the vertical of Digital Security Trainings and Internet Shutdowns Tracker. He also represents SFLC.in in litigations affecting citizens' digital rights - having appeared at the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi and Hon'ble District Court of Saket.

Shruti Narayan



Shruti Narayan is Asia Pacific Policy Counsel at Access Now, a non-profit organisation which works to extend and defend the digital rights of people across the world. She works on issues of freedom of expression, internet shutdowns, surveillance and spyware, and data protection across South Asia, including a report on YouTube's inability to detect election misinformation. Shruti is a lawyer, with litigation experience in constitutional and criminal law.

Swineryy



Swineryy is one of Pakistan's and South Asia's most beloved comedy accounts on Instagram, featuring short clips of original animated characters. Using Animoji animations on an iPhone, Swineryy has generated a collection of transgressive characters on social media that challenge norms in her country. The creator works anonymously, voices the characters and writes their stories alone.

Nilay Shah

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Nilay Shah is a Policy Counsel at the Software Freedom Law Center India. He studied law at Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai and has worked at the intersection of law, policy, and technology. He has worked with TMT teams at law firms prior to joining SFLC.in. His interests lie in technology law, international trade law, and policy research.

Rakshita Swamy



Rakshita Swamy is the Founder and Director of SAFAR. She has worked towards advocating and institutionalising transparency, accountability and citizen participation in governance through her collaborations with Central and State Governments and Civil Society Organizations. Her work focuses on conceptualising, demonstrating and institutionalising mechanisms that enable disclosure of information, time-bound grievance redress and social audits in the delivery of schemes and functioning of public institutions. She worked with the Ministry of Rural Development with a mandate to support State Governments in implementing social audits under the MGNREGA, and drawing institutional synergies on social audits with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. She is associated with the Right to Information and Right to Work campaigns. She has a Masters in Social Policy and Development from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a Bachelors in Economics from Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi.

Khush Vachhrajani



Khush Vachhrajani has a master's in Public Affairs with a specialization in Public Policy Analysis from the Brown University and an undergraduate training in Civil Engineering from Gujarat Technological University. During his time at Brown, Khush led the research for the Habitability Initiative at the Mayor's office of Complete Communities in Houston (Texas, US) that aimed at providing policy recommendations to the city administration for improving the quality of low-rent, affordable multi-family housing stock in the historically underserved communities. Prior to Brown, He was associated with the Indus Action Initiatives to lead their state operations in Gujarat in order to advocate for the implementation of the Right to Education in a transparent, inclusive, and accountable manner. He also worked on institutionalizing Social Audit in the state of Haryana among other governance reform projects as the Chief Minister's Good Governance Associate. Khush has also been a Gandhi Fellow where he spent two years working with the tribal communities in Dungarpur on issues like education, livelihoods, and agriculture. He is the National Coordinator at SAFAR.

Professor Anirban Dasgupta

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Professor Anirban Dasgupta is a development economist trained at Calcutta University and the University of California, Riverside, where he received his PhD in 2006. Before joining IIT Hyderabad in December 2022, he taught at South Asian University, New Delhi and the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Erasmus University of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. His teaching interests include poverty and inequality, development strategy and inclusive growth, and methodology of social sciences. Anirban's research areas are agrarian studies, development theory and growth processes. Most recently he has started working on the digital economy. He has published articles in the Journal of Peasant Studies, European Journal of Development Research, Development and Change, Conservation and Society and Economic and Labour Relations Review. He has contributed to multiple edited volumes and co-edited two books on development studies.

Mukesh Goswami



Mukesh Goswami has been a dedicated member of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) for nearly two decades. His work has centered on promoting transparency, accountability, and workers' rights. He has been at the forefront of struggles for democratic rights, the rights of street vendors, NREGA workers, and gig workers. He is a leading figure in the Rajasthan Asangatith Mazdoor Union (RAMU).

Paras Banjara

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Paras Banjara has been working towards promoting the rights of nomadic tribal of Rajasthan, being a vocal member of the community himself. He has worked with the Government of Rajasthan as a Programme Officer of MGNREGA in the past, and has been associated with the Social Audit Unit of the State of Andhra Pradesh, National Campaign for Protection of Child Rights and Centre for Policy Research, for developing institutionalized platforms for citizen centric accountability in the fields of education and rural development. He is associated with the Soochna Evum Rozgar Adhikar Abhiyan of Rajasthan over the past two decades. He is SAFAR's State Coordinator for Rajasthan.

Rama Devi Lanka

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Rama Devi Lanka leads the Emerging Technologies Wing of the Information Technologies, Electronics and Communication Department (ITE&C) of the government of Telangana. Her role is to formulate and execute policy frameworks that would create a conducive ecosystem for the growth of emerging technologies in the State, build institutions of excellence and assist the government in leveraging these technologies for better governance and in improving service delivery to citizens.

Aindriya Barua

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Aindriya Barua (They/Them) is a queer Indigenous neurodivergent political artist and AI engineer from Tripura, India, and the founder of Shhor AI, an initiative combating online hate speech and doxxing, specifically addressing hate speech against no marginalised communities in the Indian context and its linguistic diversity. Shhor AI was born out of Aindriya's own lived experience of facing online hate as a political artist. Their early work gained significant recognition in 2022 when they were awarded by UNFPA for their contributions to addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Since then, Shhor AI has grown into a thriving community effort and earned further accolades, including the JUST AI Award from the Digital Empowerment Foundation. Aindriya continues to use their art to make technology and digital rights more accessible, merging technology, art, and social justice to create safer, more inclusive digital spaces for vulnerable communities.

Chanukya Patnaik

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Chanukya Patnaik is an entrepreneur, problem solver, and data scientist passionate about making AI accessible to all. As the Founder & CEO of AI Planet, he leads a global community of over 300,000, focusing on democratising AI and using it to solve real-world problems. Recognised in Belgium's 40 under 40 for its societal impact, Chanukya advises Swiss scaleups like AI Business School and Global AI Hub and has delivered talks at prominent institutions, including TEDx Luxembourg and Stanford. Committed to responsible AI usage, Chanukya aims to harness AI's potential to address pressing global challenges and create a better future.

Atharva Joshi

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Atharva Joshi is a Product Manager at Civis, leveraging his expertise in technology and analytics to promote constructive dialogue between governments and citizens.

With a foundation in Computer Science, he has cultivated skills in data-driven product development, automation, and AI-driven tools for citizen engagement, deliberation, consensus-building, and collective intelligence generation. Atharva has been recognised with multiple awards and grants for his contributions to sustainable energy and healthcare research and is an active community volunteer.

Prabodh Mahajan



Prabodh Mahajan is a compassionate first-generation entrepreneur and resilient leader with over four years of experience as Co-founder and COO. He excels in community-focused, tech-driven product development, operations management, and social policy for accessibility and inclusion. Prabodh led the creation of two AI-driven platforms, scaling his deep-tech startup to a \$1.03 million valuation, impacting 12,000+ deaf users across India, APAC, UK, and the USA, with partnerships from MEITY and state governments. He has collaborated with 12+ organisations focused on disability and inclusion. As a dedicated learner, he seeks to drive impactful solutions for social empowerment and well-being.



Naveen Singh

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Naveen Singh, Founder and CEO of PhyFarm, is dedicated to bringing meaningful change to Indian agriculture through technology and AI. An alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Naveen was a founding member of a business that reached \$100 million in Annual Recurring Revenue, providing him with extensive experience in building impactful solutions. With over a decade in software development and seven years focused on cloud-connected and AI-powered agricultural hardware, he's driven by a commitment to making technology accessible and practical for farmers.

At PhyFarm, Naveen focuses on creating simple, data-driven, AI-enhanced tools that help farmers manage their resources efficiently. His work goes beyond just developing new technologies; it's about offering real support to farmers and addressing everyday agricultural challenges. Naveen's goal is to build a more sustainable future for Indian farming, benefiting both farmers and the environment.

Professor Sachidanand Sinha



Prof. Sachidanand Sinha is a former Professor of Social Geography & Regional Development Planning at the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is currently an Honorary Visiting Professor at IMPRI, New Delhi, and President of the Institute of Indian Geographers, Pune.

Dr. Prashant Narnaware



Dr. Prashant Narnaware is an IAS officer from the 2009 batch. Currently he is Commissioner of Women and Child Development, Government of Maharashtra. Earlier, among others, he has served as the Commissioner of Social Welfare, Government of Maharashtra, and Collector of Dharashiv (Osmanabad) and Palghar.

Dr. Neha Gupta

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Dr Neha Gupta is a postdoctoral fellow at the School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. She has widely researched digitalisation and planning in India.

Dr. Christian Handke

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Dr Christian Handke is an Associate Professor of Cultural Economics at Erasmus University Rotterdam. His research focuses on cultural economics and the economics of copyright, innovation and technological change, cultural/creative and media industries, as well as on text and data mining. Christian Handke has been a consultant for a variety of public and private organisations, including the European Commission. He is the Associated Editor of the Journal of Cultural Economics.

Dr. Markha Valenta

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Dr Markha Valenta is affiliated with Utrecht University in the Netherlands. She is the President of the Netherlands American Studies Association (NASA) and Director of Community-Engaged Research & Teaching (UCU).

Zinat Aboli

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Zinat Aboli is a scholar at the University of Paris City, with a deep focus on digitalisation, gender, and entrepreneurship. She specialises in transdisciplinary approaches that foster inclusive development, emphasising how digital solutions can support marginalised groups.

Juan Angel Demerutis Arenas

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Juan Angel Demerutis Arenas has been a professor and researcher at the Planning Department of the College of Art, Architecture and Design (CUAAD) of the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, since 1994. His research has focussed on urbanism and digitalisation.

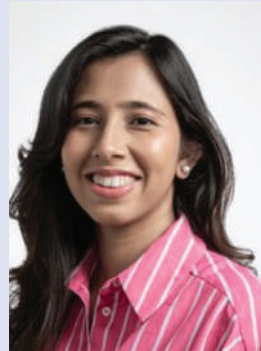
Amrita Sengupta



Amrita Sengupta is Research and Programme Lead at CIS, Amrita's research focuses on areas such as gender and technology, digital cultures, ethics in research methods, digital access, algorithmic biases in tech design, and sustainability. She is a Research and Programme Lead at the Centre for Internet and Society, India. A trained sociologist, Amrita's research interests and work lie in the areas of artificial intelligence, trust and online harms, platform accountability, information disorders, gender and technology, and sustainability and tech. She holds an undergraduate degree in sociology from Miranda House, Delhi University and a postgraduate degree in internet studies from the Oxford Internet Institute. In the past, Amrita has worked in managing and implementing large-scale people practices, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, as well as in conducting and leading long-form research on the impacts of tech on businesses and society, with both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This year, Amrita is also a CyberBricks fellow at the Centre for Technology and Society-FGV.

Ananya Bhattacharya

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Ananya Bhattacharya is Rest of World reporter based in Mumbai, India, she has over nine years of experience writing on India's tech sector, global economics, and South Asia's startup scene.

Professor Radhika Krishnan

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Professor Radhika Krishnan is a faculty member at IIIT Hyderabad, Professor Radhika's research interests lie in Political Ecology, Labour and Technology, Environment and Politics, and Just Transition.

Deepak Krishnan



Deepak Krishnan is the Deputy Director of World Resource Institute India's Energy Program. Currently, he leads the work on Industrial Decarbonisation, EVs and provides expert support to colleagues working on Urban Energy and State Energy Transitions, Responsible Energy, Critical Minerals and Circularity.



Shreeja Sen

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Shreeja Sen is Research Manager at Digital Futures Lab focusing on Responsible AI and Future of Work in the digital economy. Her research interests lie at the intersection of emerging technologies and rights of workers in an increasingly precarious workplace, and the regulation of such technologies for an equitable and just society. Before joining DFL, Shreeja spent three years at IT for Change, where she led research on workers' rights in the algorithmified platform workplace, and contributed regularly to questions of digital and data governance, Big Tech accountability, and digital trade. She enjoys writing and editing, and has engaged in the same through her work experience over the last 8 years. She has a Bachelor's degree in Law from Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University, Lucknow and a Master's in Public Policy from National Law School of India University, Bengaluru.

Anushka Jain

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Anushka Jain is a research associate at Digital Futures Lab. She is a lawyer and policy researcher interested in disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence. She is interested in the intersection of AI, gender, and the information ecosystem. She has also worked extensively on digital rights issues such as privacy, freedom of speech, surveillance, and data protection. She works as a Research Associate at Digital Futures Lab. She has done her LL.M. in Intellectual Property and Technology Law from Centre for Post-Graduate Legal Studies at O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat and her B.A. LL.B. from Institute of Law, Nirma University, Ahmedabad.



Nina Bual

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Nina Bual is the Co-Founder of Cyberlite, a leading social enterprise dedicated to promoting sustainable and equitable cyber safety and generative AI education across the Asia-Pacific region, with offices in Singapore and India. Cyberlite designs and implements comprehensive programs for child online safety and cyber resilience building in diverse communities, with an innovative approach to localisation that aligns with international policies and curricula. Nina is an active online safety advocate and speaker at international events organised by the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE), ECPAT, and the GFCE. Cyberlite is also the recipient of the Digital for Life Catalyst award by Singapore's President Shanmugaratnam for its significant contributions to child online safety education.



Siddhesh Gautam

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Siddhesh Gautam is a Delhi based multi discipline, mixed-media artist, designer, writer, poet, dreamer, storyteller and an Ambedkarite. He is working as a visual designer, artist, storyteller, and educator, and is currently working on a graphic novel on Buddhism in India. His work is currently focused on the visual documentation of the anti-caste movement, global warming and gender equality.

Professor Atul Negi



Professor Atul Negi is associated with the School of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad. He received the degree (Hons.) in electronics and communication engineering from Osmania University, Hyderabad, the M.Sc. (Engg.) degree from IISc, Bangalore, and the Ph.D. Degree from the University of Hyderabad. He was a Co-Founder Member and a Moderator of the Linux User Group, Hyderabad, and a Life Member of the Indian Unit of International Association for Pattern Recognition. He has been an Investigator with funded projects from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, and the Indian Space Research Organization. He has more than 100 peer-reviewed contributions in journals and conferences. He received the Inspiring Teacher 2010 Award from Teachers Academy, Hyderabad, India, and was invited to deliver the KK Nair Memorial Lecture, IETE, in 2012. He has been an Invited Speaker at various corporates, and at various conferences and workshops. He served as a Proceedings Editor and the Track Chair (Computing Track) for the IEEE Indicon 2011. He serves as a reviewer for a number of journals and also on the TPCs for various conferences, such as ICDAR, the IEEE SMC, IJCAI, and IJCNN.

K Mohan Raidu



K Mohan Raidu is the CEO of Informatics India, a Software Development Company at Hyderabad, India. He is a Member of ICC Digital Economy Commission and its ExecComm. Mr. Raidu is the President of Internet Society Hyderabad Chapter and Chapter Advisory Council Representative. This has enabled him to be active on ICANN WGs on ALAC, CPWG, GNSO, UASG, & be a member of APRALO, IGF, APriGF & IIGF etc. He is the APRALO's only nomination for ChAd Council Steering Group now. He has made his Chapter join the Global Encryption Collision. Future of Internet, Workshop- Universal Acceptance for Globally Connected Internet, APriGF 2021-Hyderabad Local Hub and Virtual Workshop on Internet Measurement are a few of events, he organised from ISoc India Hyderabad Chapter. Remote Hub of IGF and A Webinar on Community Networks are being planned. He is EXec Comm Member of CCICI (Cloud Computing Innovation Council of India) and he is handling the eGov WG there. Mr. Mohan is a Past Chair of CSI Hyderabad Chapter (Computer Society of India) and a Past RVP there. He is Member of HYSEA – Hyderabad Software Enterprises Association.

Dr. Salman Abdul Moiz

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Dr. Salman Abdul Moiz is a Professor at the School of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad. He received B.Sc (Electronics) from Osmania University, MCA from Osmania University, M.Tech (CSE) from Osmania University, and M.Phil (CS) from Madurai Kamaraj University and Ph.D (CSE) from Osmania University. He worked as a Research Scientist at Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Bangalore. He has published numerous papers in various National/International Conferences and Journals. His areas of interests include Mobile databases, Software Process Improvements; Component based software development & Disaster Recovery.

Dr. Madhavi Ravi Kumar

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Dr Madhavi Ravi Kumar is currently working at the Department of Communication, S N School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad. She is a journalist, academician and researcher for over 20 years. She obtained her PhD in Journalism and Mass Communication from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam and M.Phil from University of Madras, Chennai. Prior to joining the University of Hyderabad, she was with Asian College of Journalism, Chennai. She had been associated with media organisation and NGOs like The Indian Express, The Hindu, The Week, NDTV, All India Radio and M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in various capacities.



Jenny Sulfath

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Jenny Sulfath, with her five years of dedication to research and advocacy in social exclusion, has made impactful strides in both academic and development sectors. Her academic grounding in Women's Studies equips her with an essential intersectional perspective for analyzing and tackling social exclusion issues. Her career is marked by a focus on scrutinizing policy frameworks and initiating projects that illuminate the lived experiences of those facing exclusion. During her Master's studies, Jenny conducted significant research on informal workers in the service sector, earning recognition in local publications and influencing discourse on women workers' rights in Kerala. Her time as a senior researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies led to a published book by Yoda Press, shedding light on the lives

of circular migrants in Delhi. Currently, Sulfath is managing the communication team at the Digital Empowerment Foundation, Jenny ensures that research findings are accessible to a broader audience. She specializes in narrative writing, contributing to books, chapters, and online articles, and is continually seeking opportunities to advocate against social exclusion and injustice.

Dr. Saleema Razvi



Dr. Saleema Razvi is a Senior Research Economist at the Copenhagen Consensus Center, where she focuses on prioritization of policy options based on economic, social and environmental cost-benefit analyses. She has worked across the developing world in several African, Central Asian and Pacific countries. Saleema has written extensively on public health issues, non-communicable diseases, digital health, health sector regulation and growth, and the impact of liberalization on healthcare service delivery. She has written for mainstream newspapers, including a series of columns on Health policy for the LiveMint. She has earlier worked with the National Council for Applied Economic Research, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, Population Foundation of India and UNICEF.

Nitesh Bharadwaj

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Nitesh Bharadwaj is the Founder of Aadiwasi Janjagruti, an initiative under the Ulgulan Foundation, working on bringing Social Justice and creating hyperlocal awareness in the Nandurbar District of Maharashtra. It is bridging the gap between the government and its people and highlighting local issues using informational videos in local languages on government schemes. Nitesh is an Acumen India Fellow and a member of AgamiShaala.

Upasana Hembram

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Upasana Hembram began working with the Internet Society Foundation in April 2023 as an Associate Program Officer. In this role, I support the Research, Building Opportunities/ Leveraging Technologies (BOLT) and the Peering and Interconnection (IXP) grant programs. Hembram comes with a diverse professional background, having worked across public policy, social impact consulting, civic technology and

technology policy. Most recently Hembram was endowed with the Young Leaders in Technology Policy Fellowship by Omidyar Network and University of Chicago Trust in India, where I worked with a civic tech organization and a think tank to advocate for responsible use of public interest technologies. Prior to that she was a social impact consultant providing strategic advisory and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) support to social enterprises. Hembram undergraduate background is in Electrical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. She is passionate about building a digital future where digital and information technologies are accessible, sustainable, trustworthy, safe and inclusive to all.

Lauren Grubbs

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Lauren Grubbs has been with USAID for four years in the Technology Division of the Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub. She is on the Digital Inclusion team and leads the gender digital divide portfolio. She is currently the AOR for the Women in the Digital Economy Fund and has been the Activity Manager for the WomenConnect Challenge and the Microsoft Airband Digital Inclusion project. Previously, she has worked at the US State Department's Office of Global Women's Issues to cover their technology-facilitated gender-based violence portfolio, Mercy Corps' Gender Equality and Social Inclusion team, and served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ukraine.



Varnika Yertha

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At Pratham Books StoryWeaver, Varnika Yertha leads data strategy and focuses on strategic efforts in the product & technology ecosystem. Prior to this, Varnika has had extensive experience leading analytics teams at digital platforms in the marketing and fintech domain. She holds an MS in Business Analytics from the University of Connecticut and a BE from Manipal University.

Hayley Pottle



Hayley Pottle is a Digital Inclusion Analyst on the Digital Inclusion team within the Inclusive Growth, Partnerships, and Innovation (IPI) Bureau's Innovation, Technology and Research (ITR/T) Hub at USAID. As a Digital Inclusion Analyst, she contributes to the team's gender digital divide portfolio under the Digital Strategy including the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF) and ICT policy work including supporting the management of the ProICT activity under the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP). Prior to joining USAID, Hayley worked at the Institute of International Education (IIE) as a Program Manager and as a Program Manager for TechGirls, a U.S. Department of State initiative. She obtained her Master of Arts in International Education, specialising in Gender and Development at George Washington University and her Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications and Business from Virginia Commonwealth University.



Rahul Paith

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Rahul Paith, an experienced business executive with over 17 years of diverse experience across Fortune 100 companies, startups, and government entities, is currently at the helm of the Department of Science and Technology and T-Hub's Artificial Intelligence Centre of Excellence (CoE), MATH. As the chief executive officer of MATH (Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Technology Hub), Paith leads the world's largest AI/ML ecosystem initiative. Under his leadership, MATH is fostering innovation across biotech, fintech, foodtech, manufacturing, and more, connecting startups, academia, government, and industry. Paith is instrumental in shaping the future of technology and entrepreneurship.

Kaustubha Kalindi



Kaustubha Kalindi is a lawyer and program manager of Uli at Tattle Civic Tech. She has extensively worked extensively in the field of technology law and policy on matters relating to online gender-based violence (OGBV), artificial intelligence, platform governance and open source software in India.



Siddhartha Malempati

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Siddhartha Malempati, Directing Councilor-General of Commons Collective, is a seasoned professional with 17 years of diverse experience across Computer Science, Patent Law, and Economics. As the Directing Councilor-General of the Commons Collective, Siddhartha leads a global network of activists, researchers, and practitioners advocating for the commons as a force for social progress. An accomplished entrepreneur, he co-founded Helico Consulting, Octacomm Technologies, and Radius EduTech, pioneering solutions in cloud computing, video conferencing, and learning management.

Radhika Sarin



Radhika Sarin is the Director–Accelerator for the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF) and is based in New Delhi, India. Radhika leads the WiDEF Accelerator in India, that aims to identify, fund and accelerate investment in solutions to close the gender digital divide, thereby improving women’s livelihoods, economic security and resilience. Prior to this, Radhika was a Senior Manager at the GSMA Innovation Fund, engaging with startups driving digital innovation and socio-economic impact in Asia and Africa. Radhika joined the GSMA’s Mobile for Development team in 2018 as a Market Engagement Manager in the Digital Utilities team, managing grants and enabling partnerships between mobile network operators and startups.

Radhika has over 11 years of experience in working across telecom, development sector consulting and driving digital innovation. Prior to the GSMA, Radhika worked at IPE Global and Vodafone UK. Radhika holds an MSc in Economics from the University of Warwick in the UK and a BA in Economics from St. Xavier’s College, Mumbai.



Rahma Utami

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Rahma Utami is the founder & accessibility director of Suarise and the initiator of the AllyID community which has promoted and accommodated disability inclusion in the digital sector since 2017. Previously, Rahma was a creative strategist at a digital agency for 10 years and an accessibility consultant at Ability Net, England. Together with Suarise, Rahma is also pushing for the publication of national web accessibility guidelines to Indonesia's Ministry of Communication and Digital which is supported by Open Government Indonesia (OGI).

ORGANISERS

Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)

The Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), founded in 2002, is dedicated to digitally empowering India's most underserved communities, with a vision of inclusivity in the digital era. Established at a time when digital access was limited, DEF recognised the need for equitable access to technology and information for people across rural and marginalised areas. Over the past two decades, DEF has built a vast network of 1,000 Community Information Resource Centers, supported by 10,000 digital ambassadors, impacting over 30 million lives. Their focus on digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and functional skills empowers individuals, especially women, youth, and the differently-abled, to build sustainable livelihoods. DEF's initiatives span vital areas such as education, health, and livelihoods, bridging the digital divide in India's most remote and under-resourced communities. By prioritising access, capacity-building, and contextualising digital tools, DEF plays a transformative role in ensuring that technology is an enabler, not an obstacle, for all.

Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP)

The Centre for Development Policy and Practice (CDPP) is an independent research organisation dedicated to influencing public policy with a focus on improving the lives of vulnerable populations. Through research, training, and outreach,

CDPP seeks to foster policy interventions that address issues related to health, education, gender, migration, and infrastructure. The organisation emphasises the importance of evidence-based approaches to policymaking and supports the development of inclusive welfare systems. CDPP is actively engaged in publications, organising events, and providing insights that advocate for equitable development policies.

Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications, Government of Telangana

The Telangana Department of Information Technology, Electronics & Communications (ITE&C) has established itself as a leader in digital transformation through innovative initiatives and infrastructure development. With its flagship program, Digital Telangana, the department has expanded digital access across the state, aiming to make high-speed internet and digital literacy universal. Projects like T-Fiber and Hyderabad City Wi-Fi ensure connectivity in both urban and rural areas, bringing essential services closer to citizens.

Beyond connectivity, Telangana ITE&C emphasises the use of Emerging Technologies, driving advancements in AI, blockchain, cybersecurity, and more. Through initiatives like the Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence and specialised tech hubs, the department fosters a culture of innovation, preparing a skilled workforce to meet the demands of a digital economy. Programs focusing on skill development, e-governance, and electronic services further empower residents and enhance public administration.

With its focus on accessibility, innovation, and skill-building, the Telangana IT department continues to shape a future-ready state, setting a benchmark for digital governance in India.

T-Hub, Hyderabad

T-Hub, India's largest technology innovation ecosystem, is redefining the landscape for startups by fostering a culture of entrepreneurship that drives transformative change. Located in a massive 5,85,000-square-foot facility, T-Hub offers a unique environment designed to support up to 1,000 startups with world-class resources, mentorship, and collaboration spaces. T-Hub's mission extends beyond incubation; it serves as a catalyst and a global launchpad, providing startups with the critical support needed to reach new heights in innovation and impact. By offering resources that address each stage of a startup's growth, T-Hub establishes a gold standard in empowering entrepreneurs to challenge norms, disrupt industries, and bring new ideas to life. With an emphasis on community building and market access, T-Hub is creating a thriving hub that places startups at the forefront of global innovation, reinforcing India's position in the global tech ecosystem.





PRINCIPAL PARTNERS

APNIC Foundation

The APNIC Foundation is a prominent organisation dedicated to driving digital growth and fostering community empowerment across the Asia Pacific region. With its technical roots, the Foundation focuses on creating a secure, affordable, and open Internet that can be easily accessed by all. In collaboration with the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC), it works to bridge the digital divide by investing in education, training, and capacity building.

The Foundation's initiatives span multiple areas, including community development, research, and human capacity building, all aimed at strengthening the region's digital infrastructure and promoting sustainable development. By funding and managing numerous projects, often in partnership with APNIC, the Foundation ensures that its activities align with the region's needs and APNIC's priorities. These projects not only focus on Internet development but also on cultivating a network of skilled trainers and technical experts, further enhancing the region's digital resilience.

Association for Progressive Communications (APC)

The Association for Progressive Communications (APC) is an international network of civil society organisations founded in 1990, dedicated to empowering and supporting



people working for peace, human rights, development and protection of the environment, through the strategic use of information and communications technologies (ICTs). We work to build a world in which all people have easy, equal and affordable access to the creative potential of ICTs to improve their lives and create more democratic and egalitarian societies.

APC's strength lies in the fact that we don't get excited about the internet for the internet's sake. We are committed activists who want to use it to make the world a better place.

We help people to get access to the internet where there is none or it is unaffordable, we help grassroots groups use the technology to develop their communities and further their rights, and we work to make sure that government policies related to information and communication serve the best interests of the general population, especially people living in the global south.

Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP)

The Global Digital Inclusion Partnership (GDIP) is a leading force dedicated to advancing meaningful connectivity for marginalised communities worldwide. By promoting universal access to the Internet, GDIP works to bridge the digital divide through strategic initiatives focused on affordability, accessibility, and sustainability. The organisation aims to create inclusive digital ecosystems that empower individuals and communities across the globe, with a particular focus on the Asia-Pacific region. GDIP's efforts include advocating for policy changes, building human capacity through training and education, and supporting local innovation. Through these programs, GDIP ensures that digital inclusion becomes a catalyst for positive societal change, especially for underserved populations. By working closely with a diverse network of partners, GDIP strives to make the Internet a tool for economic and social empowerment, fostering a future where everyone can participate in the digital economy.

ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

Internet Society

For over 30 years, the Internet Society has been working toward an Internet for everyone. The Internet Society supports and promotes the development of the Internet as a global technical infrastructure, a resource to enrich people's lives, and a force for good in society. The work of Internet Society aligns with their goals for the Internet to be open, globally-connected, secure, and trustworthy. The organisation focuses on building and supporting the communities that make the Internet work by advancing the development and application of Internet infrastructure, technologies, and open standards, and advocating for policy that is consistent with their view of the Internet.

Broadband India Forum (BIF)

Broadband India Forum (BIF) functions as an independent policy forum and think-tank that works for the development & enhancement of the entire broadband ecosystem in a holistic, technology-neutral and service-neutral manner. BIF's endeavour is to promote, support and enhance all policy, regulatory & standards initiatives for the proliferation of high-quality broadband in the country to empower consumers with efficient and economical broadband to realise the true Digital India. BIF works closely with the Government and the Regulator in this mission. Formed in October 2015, BIF is a dedicated forum with participation from all stakeholders, including Technology Providers,

Telecom Operators, Internet Service Providers, Value-Added Service Providers, Satellite Operators and service providers, MSOs, Startups and professional entities, as well as seasoned Industry professionals who are familiar with different technologies, operations, regulations and policies. BIF has, in this short period of time, established itself as a thought leader, having contributed significantly to regulatory and policy consultations and built up a good level of credibility, reputation and standing with key institutions in India.

Purpose

Purpose uses public mobilisation and storytelling to help the leading organisations, activists, businesses, and philanthropies engaged in this fight, and create campaigning labs and new initiatives that can shift policies and change public narratives when it matters most.

Founded in 2016, Purpose India is based in New Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru.

Purpose India combines local knowledge with a global perspective to drive transformational systemic change. Their initiatives span across urban and rural India, with significant interventions in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Delhi. Purpose's work in India revolves around critical social issues such as Climate Action, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Public Health, Gender, and Equity.

Purpose collaborates with leading philanthropies and non-profit organisations including the Ikea Foundation, United Nations, David & Lucille Packard Foundation, Fondation L'Oréal, John D. and Catherine MacArthur Foundation, and Porticus Foundation – enabling them to achieve meaningful outcomes for the communities we serve.



KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS

International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad (IIITH)

International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad (IIITH) is an autonomous university, founded as a not-for-profit public-private partnership (N-PPP) in 1998, and is the first IIT in India under this model. Over the years, the institute has evolved strong research programmes in various areas, with an emphasis on technology and applied research for industry and society. The institute facilitates interdisciplinary research and a seamless flow of knowledge. Several world-renowned centres of excellence are part of IIITH's research portfolio. It has established various joint collaboration and co-innovation models with an industry outreach spanning significant national and multinational companies. Its innovative curriculum allows students the flexibility of selecting their courses and projects. Apart from academics, the institute provides students with a comprehensive environment that promotes art and culture, sports, societal contributions and self-governance.

University of Hyderabad (UoH)

Established on October 2, 1974, by an Act of Parliament (Act No. 39 of 1974), the University of Hyderabad (UoH) has grown in stature from its initial home in Sarojini Naidu's Golden Threshold residence at Abids, Hyderabad,

to the now 1800-plus-acre campus in Gachibowli, the most happening area of Hyderabad, surrounded by major software and financial companies as well as other educational institutions. In its twelve Schools, 16 Centres and the College of Integrated Studies, the University offers postgraduate and research programmes in several areas of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Performing & Fine Arts, Communication, Management, Medical Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics and Statistics, Computer and Information Sciences, and Education.

Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU)

Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) is a Central University established by an Act of Parliament in 1998. The headquarters and main campus of MANUU is located in Gachibowli, Hyderabad, Telangana State, over an area of 200 acres. The University is named after Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the freedom fighter and outstanding scholar, who as the first Education Minister of Independent India envisioned and laid the foundation of technical, scientific and higher education in India. MANUU currently offers 97 programs in both regular and distance modes. It offers 25 PhD programmes, 27 PG programmes; 15 UG programmes, 02 PG Diploma, and 19 Diploma programmes including technical diploma programmes through Polytechnics, and 09 certificate courses. It also offers vocational programmes through Industrial Training Institutes (08 Certificate Trades).

Commons Collective

Commons Collective is a community-driven organisation dedicated to creating a more equitable, just, and sustainable world. Centered around the concept of the commons, it focuses on empowering communities to collectively manage resources such as land, water, and knowledge.

The organisation champions participatory democracy, social justice, and ecological sustainability. By promoting decentralised decision-making, transparency, and cooperation, Commons Collective envisions a world where communities control their resources and tackle global issues like climate change and economic inequality through shared governance. Join the movement for a fairer, sustainable future.

Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge (TASK)

Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge was established by the Government of Telangana for enhancing skilling synergy among institutions of Government, and other stakeholders. Since its inception in 2014, TASK has taken on the mandate of skilling the youth of the state and making them more employable. Being a dynamic organisation that is sensitive to industry requirements, TASK is continuously evolving and bringing new programs with innovative pedagogies under its umbrella to address all the requirements of the 21st-century workplace.

The Barabari Collective

The Barabari Collective is a Section 8 Non-Profit upskilling students toward Tech and Design employment opportunities using a contextualised Onsite-Online model for every community.

The collective has mentored 70+ candidates toward employment opportunities, running cohorts across Maharashtra, Telangana and U.P.

SESSION PARTNERS

Software Freedom Law Center (SFLC)

The Software Freedom Law Center (SFLC.in) is a prominent legal services organisation dedicated to defending digital rights and freedoms in India. With a focus on technology policy, civil liberties, and privacy, SFLC.in advocates for the open-source software movement and works to ensure equitable access to digital resources. They offer legal support for privacy violations, censorship, and the misuse of technology while also providing education on cybersecurity and digital rights. SFLC.in's initiatives include defending freedom of speech, addressing AI regulations, and enhancing legal frameworks for digital security. Through collaborations with technologists, policy analysts, and lawyers, SFLC.in empowers individuals and organisations to navigate the challenges of the digital world.

Access Now

Access Now is a global organisation dedicated to defending and extending the digital rights of users worldwide. With operations in over 75 countries, the organisation focuses on privacy, freedom of expression, and open Internet access. Through policy advocacy, technical support, and legal expertise, Access Now addresses pressing challenges faced by journalists, activists, and civil society groups, particularly in areas prone to digital censorship and threats. Their Digital Security Helpline offers real-time assistance, helping individuals and organisations at risk safeguard their online presence.

Working closely with policymakers, Access Now strives to shape human rights-centered technology policies, combat online abuses, and hold corporations accountable for digital rights violations. Access Now's initiatives are grounded in the belief that an open, secure internet is vital for freedom, democracy, and innovation, and they aim to foster a digital environment where human rights are upheld and protected for all.

Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project (CPA Project)

The Criminal Justice and Police Accountability Project (CPA Project) works to address systemic issues within India's criminal justice system, particularly focusing on caste-based discrimination in policing. Founded to challenge colonial-era practices, the CPA Project advocates for the rights of marginalised communities, including Denotified and Tribal groups, who continue to face stigmatisation and injustice. Through legal interventions, research, and public advocacy, the project seeks to dismantle entrenched biases, ensuring that these communities are not subjected to arbitrary arrests or unfair treatment. The CPA Project also focuses on enhancing public awareness and creating long-term systemic change through a rights-based approach to criminal justice reform. The organisation's efforts aim to reshape India's criminal justice landscape to be more inclusive, fair, and just for all citizens.

Digital Green

Digital Green is a global development organisation working to create a world where farmers use technology and data to build prosperous communities. We join forces with governments, private agencies and, most importantly, rural communities themselves to co-create digital solutions that are of the community and for the community. When farmers have the tools they need to connect with one another, they're far more likely to apply what they've learned on their farms and in their households – improving their own livelihoods and those of others in their community in a manner that's nutrition-sensitive, climate-resilient, and inclusive.

Pratham Books StoryWeaver

StoryWeaver is a digital platform dedicated to providing free access to a wide range of stories for children in multiple languages. The initiative aims to promote literacy and empower children globally by offering age-appropriate, engaging content that reflects diverse cultures and experiences. StoryWeaver focuses on publishing open-source children's books, which are available for download and sharing, fostering creativity and supporting learning in underserved communities. It encourages collaboration by allowing educators, writers, and illustrators to contribute and share stories, making quality educational resources accessible to all. The platform aims to make stories available in languages that are often underrepresented in children's literature.

USAID

USAID is actively involved in digital empowerment through its various initiatives aimed at closing the gender digital divide and supporting inclusive, digital economies. One significant effort is the Women in the Digital Economy Initiative, which seeks to address the barriers preventing women's full participation in the digital economy. This initiative partners with governments, private sector organisations, and multilateral groups to improve women's access to digital resources, with a focus on making internet access and devices affordable and secure. Through the initiative, USAID also addresses the need for tailored digital tools and services that cater to women's specific needs, such as mobile devices, applications, and financial services. This aligns with their broader mission of supporting women's economic security, resilience, and livelihood through enhanced digital inclusion. USAID's collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to launch the Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF) further accelerates progress by directly funding evidence-based solutions and scaling impactful initiatives.

Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Technology Hub (MATH)

MATH is an AI incubation hub designed to foster innovation and growth in the AI sector. With a mission to empower over 150 AI startups annually and create 500+ AI-related jobs by 2025, MATH is at the forefront of AI development. The hub provides essential resources, a collaborative ecosystem, and physical space to help startups scale and succeed. Through its strategic focus on research, innovation, and global positioning, MATH aims to shape the future of AI technology, supporting startups that drive global technological advancement. The hub's vision, "AI Everywhere," emphasises its commitment to creating a significant impact in the AI landscape worldwide.

Point of View (POV)

POV thrives on a hybrid, intersectional, and inclusive approach. It integrates past work on gender, sexuality, and violence with a present focus on digital tech, disability, and storytelling. Their work bridges digital and physical spaces, while addressing both grassroots issues and global concerns. The team is diverse, encompassing various generations and identities, including women, queer, trans, and disabled individuals. This multi-faceted approach gives them unique insights and the ability to create impactful change through innovative and accessible methods.

Pacta

Pacta is a unique law firm and policy think tank based in Bengaluru, dedicated to serving the social sector in India. As the only law firm focusing exclusively on the legal needs of non-profits, Pacta offers tailored services to a diverse range of clients, including NGOs, philanthropies, family foundations, CSR entities, and social startups. The firm's expertise spans various legal areas such as education, IT & data privacy, dispute resolution, and employment law, with a special focus on disability inclusion, gender & sexuality,

and philanthropy. In addition to legal services, Pacta runs a policy think tank, contributing evidence-based research that shapes public policy for marginalised communities. Their work includes workshops, resources, and publications like the “Pulse” newsletter, which decodes complex legal issues for non-profits and social enterprises. Pacta’s commitment to building a robust legal framework for the social impact sector enables its clients to navigate the legal landscape effectively, ensuring compliance and promoting positive societal change.

Institute for Social Entrepreneurship in Asia (ISEA)

ISEA aspires to be a leading resource institution nurturing a broad-based learning and action network on social entrepreneurship and enterprise development in Asia. ISEA seeks to synergise and enhance knowledge creation, learning exchange and capacity development among social enterprises and their resource institutions to catalyse the consolidation of a fragmented social enterprise sector in the region.

ISEA also seeks to build bridges and interfaces between the social enterprise sector and the business community towards creating new models and benchmarks for pursuing social responsibility in the markets of Asia. ISEA strives to develop a common understanding of social enterprises and their role in promoting social equity and sustainability, towards advancing a movement for social entrepreneurship in the region.

Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)

Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) is a grassroots organisation based in rural Rajasthan, focused on empowering workers and peasants through the promotion of social and economic rights. Established in 1990, MKSS has played a significant role in advocating for transparency, accountability, and the implementation of key policies such as the Right to Information (RTI) Act and the Mahatma

Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). MKSS is a pioneer in utilising the RTI to fight corruption and ensure fair wage distribution in government programs.

Through its various campaigns, such as the Jawabdehi Yatra (Accountability March), MKSS works to hold the government accountable for its promises to rural citizens. The organisation's approach combines direct action with policy advocacy, offering a model of grassroots activism that links local issues with national policy change. MKSS also supports allied organisations and networks, strengthening its impact across broader socio-political issues. Their work emphasises the importance of empowering marginalised communities, ensuring they have the tools and information necessary for democratic participation and securing their rights.

Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR)

Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research (SAFAR) is a collective of activists, researchers and development practitioners. SAFAR works at the interface of the state, law and society to deepen institutions and practices of social accountability and improve access to welfare rights.

LibTech India

LibTech India (Liberation Technologies) is a research-driven organisation focused on enhancing transparency and accountability in India's public service delivery systems. It works at the intersection of technology, governance, and social impact, utilising technology to improve government programs like MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) and PM Kisan. Through action research, LibTech India addresses the challenges in public services, such as exclusions, delays, and inefficiencies, ensuring that the intended benefits reach the marginalised. The organisation's efforts include real-time data analysis, research publications, and the use of Right to Information (RTI) to promote transparency. It also trains

civil society groups and government officials to ensure better implementation of welfare schemes across states like Andhra Pradesh and Jharkhand. Their commitment to grassroots-level engagement and social innovation aims to bridge the gap between technology and effective governance.

Youth Ki Awaaz (YKA)

Youth Ki Awaaz is a platform that empowers young people in India to voice their opinions and share stories on a wide range of social, political, and environmental issues. By focusing on topics such as gender equality, climate change, education, and mental health, it creates an inclusive space for marginalised communities, giving them a platform to be heard. Youth Ki Awaaz nurtures a community of activists and changemakers, encouraging youth to engage in meaningful discussions, raise awareness, and drive positive change. Their work extends to fostering awareness campaigns, providing resources for activism, and creating opportunities for young individuals to participate in social impact initiatives. With its wide reach and inclusive approach, Youth Ki Awaaz plays a pivotal role in shaping the youth discourse in India, advocating for a more equitable and inclusive society. By leveraging digital tools, the platform allows youth from all walks of life to engage in public conversations, ensuring that diverse voices are amplified and heard at a national level. Through its work, Youth Ki Awaaz continues to inspire and empower young people to act as catalysts for social transformation, shaping the future of India's youth-led activism.

Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union (TGPWU)

The Telangana Gig and Platforms Workers Union (TGPWU) is an independent, worker-led union that was founded in 2021 to advance the interests of gig and platform workers in Telangana, India. The Union works towards the benefits of a wide variety of gig and platform workers, ranging from

app-based taxi drivers or motorcycle riders for mobility platforms (Uber, Ola, Rapido), delivery agents for logistics and e-commerce platforms (Dunzo, Delhivery, Shadowfax, Amazon, Flipkart) and food delivery platforms (Zomato, Swiggy), and 'freelance' or 'part-time' workers for gig marketplace platforms (Urban Company, Housejoy).

Tattle Civic Technologies

Tattle is a collective platform focused on addressing the growing concerns around digital harms, misinformation, and online violence. With a community of technologists, researchers, and artists, Tattle works towards creating tools and datasets that help identify and respond to harmful content, such as deepfakes, disinformation, and online gender-based violence. Their innovative projects include developing accessible technology for media literacy, such as the “Viral Spiral” card game, designed to explore biases and identity in digital spaces.

Tattle also operates Uli, a platform empowering users to tackle online gender-based violence through localised content moderation. Tattle aims to foster a healthier digital ecosystem by collaborating with experts and leveraging responsible AI. Through a blend of research, tech, and creativity, Tattle offers a unique, intersectional approach to tackling digital harms while building community-driven solutions for a safer online environment.

The Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF)

The Women in the Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF) focuses on tackling the gender digital divide by funding and scaling evidence-based solutions that enhance women's livelihoods, economic security, and resilience. It aims to improve access to affordable digital technology, increase digital literacy and skills, and elevate online safety for women and girls. With a commitment to closing the gender gap in digital inclusion, WiDEF supports initiatives that address key barriers like limited access to devices and online tools. It is partnered

with global organisations such as USAID and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is currently offering funding opportunities for entities in India targeting digital inclusion. Through its efforts, WiDEF is making a significant impact in creating more equitable, accessible, and safe digital spaces for women worldwide.

The Centre for Internet and Society (CIS)

The Centre for Internet and Society (CIS) focuses on research, advocacy, and policy engagement related to digital rights in India. The organisation works on a range of issues, including digital inclusion, privacy, cybersecurity, and the impact of technology on marginalised communities. They are particularly active in addressing the challenges of internet access and governance, privacy concerns, and promoting transparency in policy discussions surrounding digital rights.

CIS engages with stakeholders through public consultations, partnerships with various organisations, and awareness-building campaigns. They also analyse laws, such as data protection regulations, and advocate for policies that ensure the protection of digital rights, especially for vulnerable groups.

Suarise

Suarise addresses key challenges faced by visually impaired individuals in Indonesia. It focuses on equipping the blind with digital content writing skills, promoting mobility through digital platforms, and enhancing accessibility to online information. By training the blind in digital content creation, Suarise opens opportunities for remote work and employment, fostering inclusivity. Additionally, it works to improve access to digital platforms, which are often not designed with accessibility in mind. Suarise aims to close the gap, providing equal opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for people with visual impairments.

Digital Futures Lab (DFL)

Digital Futures Lab is a multidisciplinary research network dedicated to examining the intersection of technology and society in the global south. Founded in 2021, it focuses on evidence-based research, participatory foresight, and public engagement to identify pathways toward equitable and sustainable futures. The lab's work aims to ensure technology's role in shaping safe, inclusive, and caring futures, particularly for marginalised communities. Its research addresses critical issues like digital inclusion, justice, and policy transformation in the evolving technological landscape.

Cyberlite

Cyberlite is dedicated to providing free educational resources for cyber safety, AI, and digital wellbeing, aiming to ensure equitable and sustainable online safety education across Asia-Pacific nations. They offer a range of teaching materials, workshops, and training programs for students, educators, and parents. Their mission is to empower young people from diverse backgrounds with the knowledge to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. Cyberlite collaborates with organisations to promote digital citizenship and online safety education.



MEDIA OUTREACH





Thank You All !!

Let's strengthen our efforts towards
Digital Empowerment together to build
equal digital citizenship

See you all at the next
Digital Citizen Summit 2025

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